The Priest

Edited By Priests For Priests

October, 1950

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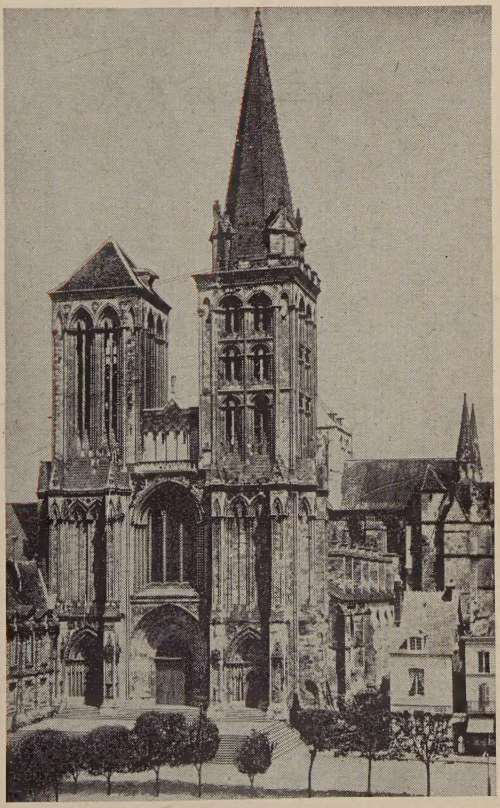

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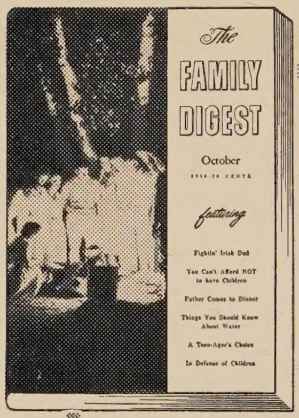

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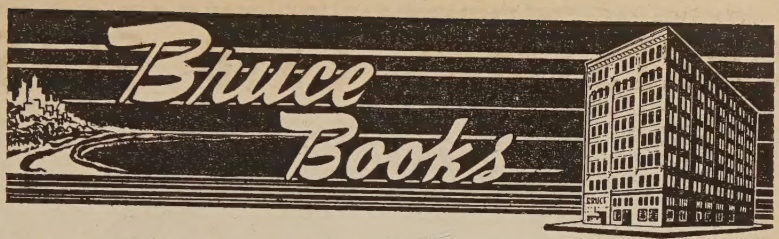

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By the Way . . .

THE following is quoted from the New York Catholic News, January 14, 1950. As far as we know, the situation still obtains:

"Recently in these columns we directed attention to the fact that of the 13 most recent appointees to the Supreme Court of the United States, only one has been a Catholic, and there is not a Catholic in the Supreme Court at this time. There is no Catholic on the regular U. S. delegation to the United Nations although Catholics constitute 22 percent of the population of the country. The recently appointed commission to investigate and conciliate international controversies has no Catholic member.

"One of the most flagrant instances of the absence of citizens who are Catholics as members of public bodies is that of the Federal Communications Commission. Religious questions are coming before this commission in increasing numbers . . . The FCC and its predecessor, the FRC, have been in existence over 22 years. In that time there have been 36 commissioners. Of the 36, only one has been a Catholic, James H. Hanley, who died 16 years ago after serving for 15 months. We repeat that no person should be named to a public post because of his religion. By the same token, no person

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should be excluded from public office for that reason. It is rather difficult to believe that the fact that there has been but one Catholic among 36 members of the FCC over a period of 22 years, and that this single exception served only 15 months, is purely accidental."

One Year's Record

A LAY friend of ours, having moved into a strange parish, keeps sending us copies of the weekly bulletin. Always nosey, there are few things we enjoy more than looking over the bulletin of a neighboring parish.

A recent issue discloses some extraordinary data, Expenditures on the poor of the parish last year came to $7,359.59, most of it collected through the poor-box. Altogether 3,233 individuals received help, including four surgical operations. Forty-seven physicians volunteered their services; 18 of the poor got hospital care, and 37 were taken care of at various clinics. The parish found jobs for 339 unemployed.

The work resulted in five converts, eleven baptisms, and the return of fifty-nine souls to the sacraments, matrimony included.

The parish? Sacred Heart, Pittsburgh. Father "Tom" Coakley has reason to be proud of the record.

Those Stocks

FRIEND of ours, drawing up his will, left his oil stocks to his curate. But his executor had a great time of it convincing the judge that

THE PRIEST **OCTOBER, 1950** **VOL. 4, NO. 10**

"Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching: be earnest in them. For in so doing, thou wilt save both thyself and those who hear thee."
First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy (iv. 16)

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God's Afflicted Ones

WE'VE just finished a stretch of over four years during which, every Monday morning, we offered the Holy Sacrifice in a state hospital for the insane. We'd go up a half hour ahead of time and hear maybe eighteen or twenty confessions. In the meantime, the patients would gather around the altar, coming with their nurses and attendants in little groups from all the buildings, many of them all crippled up, half-blind, and half-deaf — a heart-rending sight.

Strange as it may sound, they were the most orderly and quiet congregation we've ever met. The one disturbance standing out in our mind was St. Stephen's Day when, just as we were opening the Missal before Mass, some woman got to her feet and started cursing us at the top of her lungs. What to do?—retire?—or go on with the Sacrifice? From our red vestments she had got the idea that we were a Communist.

Attendants came flying from all directions, which only increased the patient's confusion. She was sure, then, that we were trying to restrict her freedom of speech and worship.

So often the patients would ask us to get in touch with their pastor. They're lonesome, you see. They yearn for the sight of the one they revered so highly in the happy time now past.

And, sad to say, too few pastors do call on their mentally disturbed

Thomistic Philosophy

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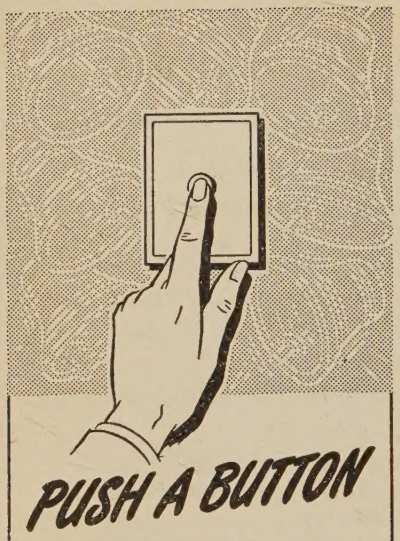

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parishioners. With the fine autumn weather coming up, why not drive out some afternoon to the mental hospital serving your district? It's a corporal work of mercy. Only on the Day of Judgment shall we learn how highly Our Lord prizes these visits paid to Himself when He was sick in the person of these, His poor afflicted children.

Evening Masses During The Week

IN a letter published recently, Bishop J. J. Van der Velden of Aachen, Western Germany, declared that it would be desirable to allow Mass to be celebrated in the evening not only on Sundays but every day. Conditions at the present time are such that "the masses of workers, employees and civil servants cannot attend Mass" during the week, he declared; many of them would be able and willing to do so if they could go to church in the evening, he pointed out.

Previously Bishop Albert Stohr of Mainz had stated in his Lenten Pastoral that daily Mass in the evening would be desirable because it would "make it possible for the workers to participate in the Holy Sacrifice."

We wonder if we could use a little of this over here, too. Would it merit a trial, say, in one or two of the downtown churches in our larger cities?

'Artificial Life'

A recent heading from UP's science news caught our eye. It read: "Doctor Would Stop Prolonging 'Artificial Life.'" We thought to ourselves, "What in the name of all that's science and holy, is 'Artificial Life'?"

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The come-on did its work, so we read the rest, but with gradually growing sentiments of having been tricked again. For what was herein labeled so misleadingly was simply the age-old problem of how far a man has to go to stay alive.

Not that the article was without interest or relevancy.

A certain Dr. Roskam, professor of internal medicine of the University of Leige had delivered a lecture to the first International Conference on Gerontology (perhaps we might roughly translate this formidable term as "the science of old age") in which he deplored the "useless" prolonging of life in those hopelessly ill and definitely doomed. Not euthanasia, though, but orthothanasia—to use his term—was what he advocated. At this point we began to grow particularly interested — as what priest who has waited hours or days by the sick bed would not?

In effect, he discussed the rights and wrongs of keeping one **in extremis** by the utilization of extraordinary means: when shall we permit a dying man to die?

Dr. Roskam pointed out that our hospitals are "cluttered" with these hopeless cases to the detriment of others who might otherwise be treated adequately by a now harassed staff of nurses and doctors. Why keep alive those who cannot stay alive by their own "natural means and resources"? Such a prolongation of life he called "hypocrisy." Judging by the article we saw there was no discussion of the sufferings of the patient, no consideration of theological issues, though the scope of the original lecture may well have run beyond its summary in our local paper.

Father Kelly's Article

The item did, however, remind us of a thorough and enlightening article in **Theological Studies** for June, 1950, which we can hardly do more than call to your attention here. Written by Gerald Kelly, S.J., of St. Mary's College, it was entitled: "The Duty of Using Artificial Means of Preserving Life." So the question is not one of "artificial life," as the papers had it, but of "artificial means."

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1950 St. Michael's Hospital, Grand Forks, N. D., now in progress, $500,000 to be raised.

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1950 St. Mary's School of Sacred Heart Parish, Medford, Ore., predicted attainment, $135,000; subscribed, $143,629.

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vey of theological opinion and modestly suggests some answers which for the most part he considers tentative. His aim seems to be heuristic and he evidently hopes to provoke further discussion of a most practical and pressing problem.

It would be decidedly less than fair to attempt to summarize the article—which is closely integrated already and leans upon a number of careful distinctions. We suggest that you get the original. Further, we hope that such material can be made more easily available.

Just to excite your curiosity let us ask a few random questions. What do you consider ordinary means of prolonging life? The ethical code for Catholic hospitals lays down this principle: "The failure to supply the ordinary means of preserving life is equivalent to euthanasia."

Fr. Kelly cites a questionnaire submitted to authorities of eleven hospitals concerning the status, from this point of view, of the use of oxygen tents, blood transfusions, and subcutaneous feeding to preserve the life of a new-born monstrosity. Of course the case is complicated by the fact of abnormality, but eight of the eleven considered oxygen and feeding ordinary, six considered the transfusions ordinary. (Transfusions in the case of the infant are much more difficult.)

The Expense Involved

What about computing expenses in distinguishing the ordinary from the extraordinary? In one Midwestern city, oxygen tents rent

Continued on page 788

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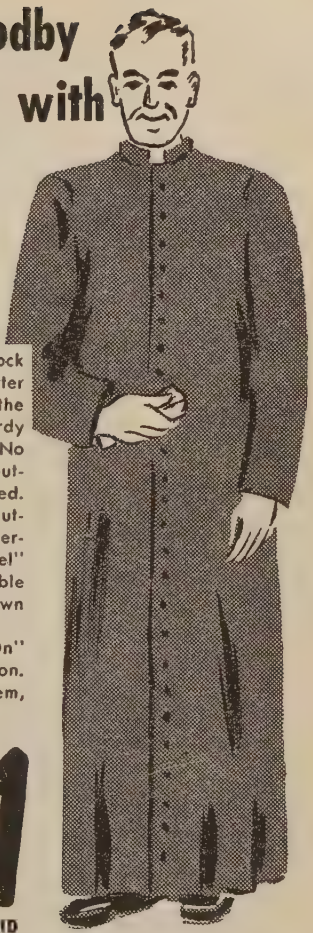

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The Priest

Vol. VI OCTOBER, 1950 No. 10

Editorial Comment

Assumpta est Maria

IN the year 1712, St. Louis Mary de Montfort wrote in his *Treatise on True Devotion to Mary* that "God wishes to reveal and make known Mary, the masterpiece of His hands, in these latter times." This he clarified later in his text by the question, "When will that happy time, that Age of Mary, come?"

Father Chaminade, writing a century later, likewise predicted the advent of an Age of Mary. There are those—especially the De Montfort Fathers—who think we are actually in that age, "if not in its apogee, at least in its dawn," as the editor writes in *Queen of All Hearts.*

Just what is meant by the "Age of Mary"? It is a day "in which Mary comes into full possession of her rights as Mother, Mediatrix and Queen of all Hearts"; when, as St. Louis puts it, "Mary will be established Mistress and Queen of All Hearts, in order to subject them fully to the empire of her great and holy Jesus . . . when souls will breathe Mary as the body breathes air."

Think of Our Lady's many recent appearances: the Miraculous Medal (1830), La Salette (1846), Lourdes (1858), Fatima (1917)—nor do those names by any means exhaust the list.

There is the enthusiasm with which the Sorrowful Mother and Miraculous Medal Novenas have swept the country, together with the Block Rosary, and the Pilgrim Virgin; the increase of belief in Mary as Mediatrix of all Grace.

Finally and most significent, there is the growing preoccupation of the Holy See—the personification, after all, and the oracle of the Universal Church—with Mary's glory: the definition of the Immaculate Conception by Pius IX in 1854; the frequent Encyclicals of Leo XIII on the Rosary.

Now we find that Pius XII may well go down in history as

the Marian Pope. The many mysterious coincidences binding his personal career to the revelations at Fatima, the consecration of the world, and of Russia in particular, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, extending the observance of that Feast to the whole world,—these things do make history. Above all, next month he will define the Assumption of our Blessed Mother as dogma divinely revealed.

Often in the past a definition of dogma has come at the end of acrimonious debate only to be followed by schism and heresy, even religious war. One thinks of the bitter struggles which first culminated in Nicea and represented the beginnings of the breach between East and West when under the pressure of Constantinople, as Jerome wrote, "The whole world groaned and marvelled to find itself Arian."

Even the defining at Ephesus that Mary was truly the Theotokos, the Dei Genitrix, though hailed by throngs who escorted the Fathers of the Council to their quarters with torches and amid clouds of incense, was dimmed, if one may use that term, by riots and political intrigue, personal jealousies, connivings and the official show of force.

That magnificent feat of exposition and synthesis known as the Council of Trent, though it was an incomparable fulfillment of Christ's promise to be with His Church "all days even to the consummation of the earth," must have seemed but a little later to be the beginning of that consummation itself as religious and political wars rent Europe asunder and strewed its fields with the dead.

In contradistinction to all this, in the doctrine of the Assumption, we possess our faith in peace. We all accept it. There is no controversy, no acrimonious debate, no withholding or begrudging of assent; there will follow neither schism nor heresy.

The Catholic press, in fact, chronicles an "unprecedented unanimity of opinion among the Bishops of the world." More than 98% of the world's residential bishops in response to a Vatican poll have expressed approval of the proclamation scheduled for November the first.

In the ten year program of collation of pertinent material there has been a crescendo of agreement so much so that Fr. Wilhelm Hentrich, who with Fr. de Moos served as qualifier to the Holy Office, likens the enthusiasm of recent years to a sea that had broken through a dike.

Fathers Hentrich and de Moos in 1942 prepared and published an exhaustive list of petitions presented to the Holy See from the reign of Leo XIII at which time they began to be placed on file in the Holy Office. The petitions are arranged in hierarchial order beginning with Cardinals, patriarchs, councils and synods, residential bishops, vicars capitular, coadjutors, auxiliary bish-

ops, prefects apostolic, religious orders, universities, Catholic faculties and congresses. To be exact, there are petitions from 113 cardinals, 18 patriarchs, 2,505 archbishops and bishops, 383 vicars capitular, 32,000 petitions from the secular and religious clergy and more than 8,000,000 from the faithful.

"Such a consensus before the formal definition," Father Hentrich said, "has almost never before been verified in the history of the Church." He cited as examples the polls before the definition of the Immaculate Conception, and of Papal Infallibility, when the dissenters were more numerous.

One cannot help thinking of Cardinal Newman and his opposition to William George Ward or Cardinal Manning's extremist party whom Newman described as "an insolent and aggressive function" when the dogma of Papal Infallibility was under heated discussion in the Sixties of the last century. But now not a ripple disturbs our Catholic serenity.

Outside the Church, true, there have already been protests. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have remarked: "The Church of England renders honor and reverence to the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. But there is not the smallest evidence in the Scriptures or in the teaching of the early Church of belief in the doctrine of her bodily assumption." The objection is simply irrelevant since it misses the point of the arguments advanced for the fact of the Assumption, or is, at best, the usual Protestant misunderstanding of the rule of Faith and the role of the organs of Tradition. It represents a failure of confidence in Christ's promise to preserve His Church from error.

It has, in fact, been answered in anticipation by the 200 fathers of the Vatican Council who wrote in 1870: "Most ancient and constant in both the Western and the Eastern Church, in the C h u r c h both teaching and taught, is the opinion about the corporal assumption of the Mother of God. But this fact, namely, that a man's body be living in heaven before the Judgment Day cannot be confirmed either by the senses or any human authority. Therefore, unless we wish to say that the most firm faith of the Church regarding the corporal assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary savors of slight or excessive credulity, which is undoubtedly impious even to think of, it must be most firmly held that this opinion is of divine and apostolic tradition, namely that it originates from revelation."

The Archbishop of Canterbury complains further that we are "driving another wedge into Christendom." The objection startles us! Who is driving what, where? Let us quote again: "Most ancient and constant in both the Western and the Eastern Church, in the Church both

teaching and taught, is the opinion about the corporal assumption of the Mother of God."

The Assumption is an integral part of our Catholic heritage, of our Christian heritage. It is a doctrine essentially implicated in the dogma of the Maternity and implied in the prerogatives of Mary Immaculate. It is the mark of her triumph, through and with her Son, over sin, concupiscence and death. It is of a piece with twenty centuries of Christian thinking. To proclaim it in a solemn way and by papal definition is hardly by any stretch of the imagination the driving of a wedge into Christendom. It is rather to make a ringing asseveration of the faith of our fathers.

De Maria numquam sat.

The Editors

Islanders Have Breeding

In some of the inhabited islands of Ireland I have found a courtesy that is impossible to describe. The inhabitants may now be peasants, but they are the remnants of ancient races and are gentlefolk in the literal and highest meaning of that phrase.

I shall never forget a conversation that I had on the steamer with an Aran man who was going to Galway Fair to sell a cow. He asked me how I had liked my holiday in Aran, and when I replied that I had enjoyed it immensely, mentioning casually that I found the people so courteous, he turned towards me with a look of astonishment and said: "Well, isn't it a proper thing to be kindly to strangers?"

I felt ashamed of myself. Here was a peasant living on what somebody has described as a barren rock in the Atlantic Ocean stating a fundamental Christian axiom which is often forgotten in these days of intense materialism, and he was astonished that I should have mentioned it as a fact worthy of notice.—Thomas H. Mason, M.R.I.A.

But Who Laid Hands on Them?

Montreal — In a recent ordination in Grace Church, Manchester, New Hampshire, priests and ministers of other communions joined with Dr. Hall, the Bishop, in laying hands on the candidate to make him a "priest in the Church of God." It was explained that it is the intention of the Protestant Episcopal Church to ordain its clergy to a universal ministry in the Church, rather than to a denominational office.—**The Daily Star.**

Converts Testify

Analyzing the testimony of thirty converts

John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.

WE have recently completed a careful study of the conversions of thirty men and women to the Catholic faith. Fifteen of them tell the story of their spiritual Aeneid in *The Road to Damascus* while the others present their narratives in the new symposium, *Where I Found Christ* (Edited by myself and published in August by Doubleday). Among the contributors to the latter volume are Jacques and Raissa Maritain, Thomas Merton, Bishop Hunt, Katherine Burton, Daniel Sargeant, Lucile Hasley, David Goldstein, Dorothy Day, and Christopher Hollis.

All the converts are persons of superior education and culture and most of them have written at least one book. They have undertaken to describe their quest for Christ and His Church solely with the thought that their experience may be helpful to others searching for the light.

Because they are experienced in analyzing mental attitudes and emotional stirrings and possess unusual literary articulateness, they are able to throw significant light upon the inner drama of the soul's quest for God. An analysis of their testimony will throw light upon the motivation of their quest, the evidence which brought conviction, the operation of divine grace in their souls, the nature of conversion, and the resulting peace, security and happiness which they experienced.

These are the topics of profound interest to all priests engaged in convert work (and what priest is not?) and hence we shall present briefly for the readers of THE PRIEST the findings of this analytical study of thirty conversions on these items of fundamental importance.

Motivation

A scrutiny of their testimony indicates that though they traveled by different paths, the motive underlying all the pilgrimages was fundamentally the same: *the desire to find God and the fullness of divine revelation.* The soul estranged from God suffers from a spiritual distemper that allows him no peace of mind or soul. Yet this is precisely what man wants most of all. But peace is the tranquility of order; and as long as God is absent from the human soul, chaos and anarchy reign, and serenity is conspicuous by its absence. Hence we witness on all sides today a mad, restless, feverish search for peace—a search that is filling the offices of physicians and psychiatrists and crowding our sanitariums.

The quest for such peace is,

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however, no transient phenomenon of our day; it is as old as the race and as universal as mankind. Uttered by our first parents in the Garden of Eden, that cry has continued its reverberations in the bosom of all their progeny; and it will still be echoing in the heart of man when his little planet disappears with him and all his workers into the abyss where time ends and eternity begins. In searching for such peace man is but seeking to appease a hunger planted in his heart by God: the craving of the soul for its Creator, the yearning of man for his Maker, the cry of the orphan for his Father.

God, Christ, the fullness of divine revelation, the institution founded by Christ to transmit such a spiritual legacy to mankind in all ages: these are what the pilgrims found at the end of their Odyssey. They could demand nothing more and be content with nothing less. They wanted not mere probability but certainty; for the possibility of being in error would open the flood gates of doubt with its torrent of disquieting fears and anxieties. The pilgrims sought and found not a partial truth but the whole truth.

When asked to state the real reason why she embraced the Catholic faith, Clare Boothe Luce replied that it was because she had found after careful investigation that the Catholic religion is the solid objective Truth. "And when I say the solid objective Truth," she added, "I mean just that and not, as some imagine the convert means, 'one of the best aspects of the Truth.' If Catholic doctrine had seemed to me 'only one aspect of the Truth,' I should still be seeking the whole Truth, of which it was only the part."

Unwavering Assent

Such too is the basic reason which prompts every convert to embrace the Catholic faith. It satisfies completely the deep and ineradicable craving of the human soul for the security and peace which flow only from the certainty of possessing the whole truth. "Without faith," the Apostle Paul declares, "it is impossible to please God."

Faith implies, however, a firm and unwavering assent. Any element of hesitancy, vacillation, or doubt vitiates faith and destroys that unfaltering acceptance and implicit trust which render the act so meritorious and so pleasing in the sight of God. Job gives a memorable voicing of the indestructible trust which lies at the heart of faith when he cries out, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Such firm, unwavering, and absolute trust characterizes the faith of all Catholics. Outsiders, groping in uncertainty, sense it in Catholics and marvel at it. Thus, Lucille Hasley reports that when she would be upset, her Catholic roommate, McCar-

thy, would remark casually, "Don't worry. I offered up my communion for you this morning." Therein was mirrored the serene confidence which only unquestioning faith in God and in the power of prayer could inspire.

Such is the faith which the Master wished to instill in the disciples when, after causing the fruitless fig tree to wither away, He said to them: "Amen, I say to you, if you shall have faith, and stagger not, not only this of the fig tree shall you do, but also if you say to this mountain, Take up and cast thyself into the sea, it shall be done. And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing you shall receive." It is precisely in this element of absolute trust and unwavering confidence that the saving, healing, justifying, strengthening and thaumaturgic power of faith consists.

Miracles Bear Witness

That is why miracles do not seem to Catholics the utterly strange and inexplicable phenomena which they appear to those outside the fold. They involve no intrinsic contradiction and are well within the competence of an omnipotent God. Every land has its Catholic shrines wherein miracles bear striking witness to the veracity of Christ's description of the power of faith and prayer.

The Annals of Lourdes containing affidavits of physicians, of all faiths and of none, concerning the incurable nature of the disease of the pilgrim and later of its complete and, in many cases, almost instantaneous cure, offer objective and demonstrative evidence to a world which, like the doubting Thomas of old, must needs see in order to believe.

The pilgrim who visits the shrine of Our Lady at Lourdes in France, of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, of St. Anne de Beaupre in Quebec, and of St. Joseph in Montreal will see great numbers of wheel chairs, crutches, plaster-of-Paris casts, and other evidences of invalidism left remaining there to bear mute witness to the miraculous cures received. Most impressive of all is the carefully documented testimony at Lourdes.

It was the objective, dispassionate character of this evidence that appealed so profoundly to the eminent medical scientist, Alexis Carrel. He shows how unscientific it is to refuse to face this evidence and to draw the only conclusion possible from the premises, namely, that the effect so far transcends the forces of nature that it must be attributed to God alone.

He describes at length the phenomena at Lourdes, which he had examined with characteristic thoroughness and open-mindedness. These clear manifestations of divine intervention in the world of nature, along with other objective evidence, caused this eminent scholar,

honored with the Nobel prize for his scientific discoveries in medicine and crowned with honors from many other countries, to embrace the Catholic faith before death stilled his brilliant mind and questing heart.

He had the simplicity and the open-mindedness of a Pasteur and history will bracket the two of them together for their world-renowned contributions to medical science as well as for their deep faith in God and in the Church which He founded. Pasteur gave a memorable expression to that faith when, at the pinnacle of his fame, with the world acclaiming him the greatest scientific genius of the age, he wrote to his children: "The more I know, the more nearly is my faith that of the Breton peasant. Could I but know all, I would have the faith of a Breton peasant *woman*."

Three Steps

In the process of conversion, as reported by the contributors of these two symposia, we can distinguish three distinct steps. The first is the investigation of the credentials of the Church. The circumstance which draws a person's attention to the Church and prompts him to begin his inquiry is as various and as manifold as there are individual inquirers.

With Daniel Sargeant, it was his study of Dante that led him to investigate Dante's faith. With Fulton Oursler, it was the spell which the Holy Land cast over him that prompted him to re-examine the life of Christ and thus led him to the Church which He founded. With Jacques and Raissa Maritain it was their acquaintance with Leon Bloy and later their reading of the lives of the saints which aroused their interest in the Church. Any of a thousand circumstances can lead to the awakening of an interest in the Church and a determination to investigate her teachings.

The second step is the study of the Church, her divine establishment, her doctrines, her means of sanctification and her credentials. To be fruitful this examination must be made with an open mind and a willingness to confront all facts with one's reason instead of with one's prejudices. The Church invites the fullest investigation; she conceals nothing of her doctrine or of her long history; during this inquiry she makes no appeal to the emotions but to the intellect alone. She is confident that Christ has stamped clearly and indelibly His own divine imprint upon her and that the unprejudiced mind of the honest inquirer will be able to discern it.

The marks which distinguish Christ's Church from all others are chiefly her unity, sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity. Running as a unifying thread through all these marks is her divine origin: Christ is her Founder and her Guarantor. She has been governed by Peter and an unbroken chain of successors

from the days of Christ to the present time. She presents the historic credentials of her foundation and of her divinely appointed commission to teach all mankind in the name of Christ Himself.

So overwhelming is the historical and objective cogency of her credentials that they can scarcely fail to bring conviction, when examined with an open mind and a sincere desire to embrace the truths of Christ and the means provided by Him for man's sanctification and salvation. The experience of the scholarly converts, described in these two volumes, offers ample corroboration of this truth. Regardless of the point at which they started, they all arrived at the same destination. The conclusion reached at the end of this second stage then is simply this: The Catholic Church, founded by Christ and authorized to teach in His name, is the true Church.

Act of Faith

This leads to the third and last step: the act of faith. The intellectual conviction that the Catholic Church is the true precedes the act of faith but it is not to be identified with it. One may have the intellectual conviction just mentioned and yet hesitate or refuse to make the act of faith. This latter requires the "good will to believe," the disposition of the will to bend the intellect in a genuflection of faith before the throne of divine truth. The act of faith amounts essentially to this: I believe what the Church teaches because God has revealed it.

While all three steps imply the grace of God, it is the last step which requires a special grace—the gift of faith. That grace is obtained through earnest prayer. God will not deny it to the man of good will, who on his knees begs for it. He will receive the grace of a gentle submissiveness prompting him to render homage to God by freely, piously and reverently submitting his mind to God's word; this grace enables him to give effect to his conviction by proclaiming: "I do believe that God has given me the Church to be my teacher. I believe it on the authority of God Himself who can neither deceive nor be deceived." Such is the essence of the act of faith.

It is to be noted that faith rests upon the authority of God revealing and thus engenders a certainty which transcends that attainable by mere human reason. Once reason has brought the conviction that God has spoken and that it would be wrong and foolish to deny His word, it opens the door that admits him to a far higher and different kind of certainty that rests directly and immediately upon the authority of God the revealer.

The various lines of human reasoning by which man climbs to the final summit of God's revealed word upon which he then reposes may be compared to the rungs of a ladder by which one

climbs to a secure platform upon which he stands with no further need of the ladder. The supreme consideration prompting belief in a doctrine thenceforth is not the argument developed by this or that theologian but simply the authority of God who has revealed it.

The Will to Believe

The intellect alone cannot coerce an ill-disposed person, even if convinced of the truth, to make an act of faith. The good will to believe is all important. "As men may be convinced," observes Cardinal Newman, "and not act according to their conviction, so may they be convinced and not believe according to their conviction . . . The arguments for religion do not compel any one to believe, just as arguments for good conduct do not compel any one to obey. Obedience is the consequence of willing to obey, and faith is the consequence of willing to believe; we may see what is right, whether in matters of faith or obedience, but of ourselves we cannot will what is right without the grace of God."

Long before Cardinal Newman, the Apostle Paul who peered deep into the wellsprings of conduct voiced this same truth when he declared: "To will is present with me, but to accomplish that which is good, I find not. For the good which I will, I do not." Psychologists have long pointed out the important difference between mere ineffectual wishing and actual willing—a world of difference.

We have developed this point at some length because it throws light, we think, upon how the will may be deterred from action even after the intellect has been convinced. Take, for instance, the person who was taught from his earliest years that the pope is Antichrist and Catholicism is pagan idolatry. Later on he examines the Church and her doctrines and discovers that his previous conceptions were mere caricatures, that this is the Church actually founded by Christ to teach all mankind His truths. Nevertheless the fear of the Church which was planted in his young mind still colors his imagination and prevents his will from following through with his present intellectual convictions.

How often circumstances of such nature hamstring the will and delay, if they do not completely prevent, the act of faith! Hence the enormous emphasis which the Church places upon the importance of praying for the grace of faith: it emancipates the will from unreasonable fears and unworthy motives and disposes it to elicit the all-important act of trust in God and in His revealed plan for man's salvation. Indeed, it can be safely affirmed that the truth-seeker comes to God most effectively on his knees in prayer; and it can be doubted if he reaches Him in any other way.

'Prudence' and Our Negro Catholics

Casimir Marcevicius

Would Christ segregate them?

EVERY day in the United States twenty-one Negroes become members of the Catholic Church. Every year during the last ten years some 5,000 Negroes have joined. In 1948 alone, 7,963 Negro converts were reported. The total number to become Catholics within the last ten years is more than 60,000.

These figures, standing by themselves, sound imposing enough. Like all statistics, however, they do not tell the whole story. How many of these Negro converts, for instance, soon lose heart and drift away? Compare these figures with the fact that out of forty Negroes only one is a Catholic and they become almost as worthless as canceled stamps. Only 345,000 out of 15-million Negroes in the United States are Catholics, and who knows—from even that small number—how many have since fallen away? In our craze for numbers we have become proud with achievement because the Negro Catholic population has doubled in the last twenty-five years. We forget that there are also mass apostasies.

Perhaps there are many reasons for this frustration, a frustration bought at a great price: 395 Catholic churches, 292 elementary schools, 25 high schools, 566 priests, 1600 Sisters, 250 lay teachers—all for Negroes, all the result of years of work and sacrifice.

Basically the frustration is real. It begins when the Negro convert faces for the first time the dilemma of American Catholicism: salvation within the pattern of segregation and discrimination. It is the square-circle, the stone too big for God to lift, the road map for fence straddlers.

For many educators and religious leaders the way out of this dilemma is "prudence" (the habit of postponing radical—Christian—solutions to social problems merely because they are dangerous). The result of this attitude is expressed in such anomalies as a Catholic girls' school which refuses admission to a qualified Negro girl who is a Catholic but admits an equally dark non-Catholic girl who happens to be a Mohammedan. The classic example, of course, is that of a Negro being refused the Blessed Sacrament at the communion rail.

Whatever the circumstances, whatever the conceivable justification, "prudence" costs souls and money. Expensive buildings, thousands of missionaries and teachers are not enough for lasting genuine Negro conversions.

Even with all these elaborate advantages our success is superficial and momentary, our work a failure—so long as we retain the pattern of segregation in our

schools and churches. Only a thoroughly Christian program that includes every Negro as a *man* will be adequate. Send him these priests and Sisters and programs—minus segregation in any form—and then only can the statistics truly indicate flesh-and-blood reality.

The Effect of "Prudence"

Much of this failure to convert Negro America can be derived from the fact that we do not realize the tremendous emotional and psychological effect "prudence" has on his faith. During the last summer I have had the opportunity to study this factor as it was present among Negro Catholics in various racial disturbances that took place in Chicago. Consulting with Betty Schneider of Friendship House and with other authorities on race relations, sometimes in their company, I made the following observations: The effect of "prudence" on Negro Catholics and its similarity in cases in other cities should be recognizable.

There was Ima Jean, who wanted to become a Catholic since she was eight years old. "I want to belong to a Church with a cross," she'd often tell her mother.

"Wait until you are a little older," her mother would say. "If you still want to be a Catholic, it's all right with me."

Several years later Ima Jean tried again. "Give me fifty cents, mother. I want to buy a Baltimore Catechism." And she became a Catholic.

Not long ago Ima Jean found the cross in her church: When she presented her son to be admitted to a Catholic school, the pastor offered to pay tuition and carfare to send the boy to another school, because Ima Jean and her son are Negroes.

At another Catholic church in Chicago a pastor urged his parishioners to keep Negroes from moving into the parish because the property values of the church and school buildings would thereby be lowered.

As a result of these attitudes quite a few Negro Catholics are upset about their church. In the area where this happened, several of the Negroes stopped going to Mass. "I haven't been to Mass in three weeks," one parishioner said. "I just can't bring myself to go."

"I was *so* mad," said another, "that I ate meat last Friday just for meanness."

Of course, these attitudes are not necessarily justified. They are included in this article to show the affect of "prudence" on Negro Catholics, not entirely for purposes of approval.

Since 1946 the Park Manor district of Chicago has been a tension area. The first family that moved into the area met with a spray of stones for hours, and moved that same day. When others moved into the district similar treatment followed. The worst demonstration took place last summer when a mob of 2,000 men, women and children set fire and stoned for hours one of the Negro homes. Violence,

bombing and general confusion followed.

No Encouragement from Fellow-Catholics

But worse than all this, the Catholic Negroes of the area felt, was the fact that they received no encouragement nor help or even interest from their parish priests or white fellow-parishioners. It was only when Betty Schneider from Friendship House went into the area to talk to the victimized people that they broke down and let go of their bitterness. "We're so glad you came to us," they told her. "Do you know you're the only one, among the Catholics, who has taken an interest in us"

In front of another Negro home in typical Ku Klux Klan fashion a cross was burnt, the front window of the house was smashed. It is hard to imagine the feelings of these people toward their church. During the school year the mother of that family used to rise at six o'clock every morning to get her little girl ready for school. She paid a dollar a week to have her daughter taken to a neighboring parish, thirty blocks away, because the pastor of her own parish did not admit Negro children to his school.

For the first time in her life this mother stayed away from Mass, and has lost all interest, because of the attitude of her pastor. Who would dare tell her to make the distinction between the Church and the peccable priests that sometimes represent the Church? To such a one distinctions have little meaning.

Since the first demonstration against Negroes in Chicago, the Negroes of the tension area have organized into a Civic League. At one of their meetings a survey of the attitude of the various churches in the district was reported.

The outstanding conclusion of the survey was that no one church denomination was any different from any other so far as taking leadership in the racial policy was concerned. Conspicuous for being "just like all the other churches" were the Catholic churches in the area.

The examples of "prudence" that I learned about in Chicago were not all negative. It is gratifying to note that there are priests who have demonstrated great courage and have shown what the true spirit of the Church should be in this matter.

When a dangerous racial disturbance threatened in a Milwaukee trailer camp, Father Franklyn J. Kennedy, editor of the *Catholic Herald Citizen*, and Claude Heithaus, S.J., of Marquette University, joined with other civic leaders to plead eighteen to twenty-four hours a day for four days with ringleaders of a white mob. The incident ended in what has been called "a minor miracle—" with the mob leaders apologizing to the Negro whose right to live in the trailer camp had been questioned. And the two priests were commended on the floor of the

House of Representatives in Washington, D. C.

In another instance, when a Negro family, wanting to move from their over-crowded Ghetto into a new neighborhood, was threatened by white Catholics, two Chicago priests personally unloaded the furniture and carried it into the house.

Another Heartening Instance

In a Chicago suburban parish the new pastor noticed a Negro woman with three children going to communion every Sunday. Come September, the pastor, while passing the nearby public school, noticed those same children in the playground. He motioned to them and they came running.

"Don't you go to communion every Sunday in the Catholic Church" he said.

"Yes."

"Then why don't you go to the Catholic school?"

The oldest girl looked to the ground before she answered. "Mother says we can't go to your school."

"Will you please ask your mother if she can come to see me this evening in the rectory?"

"Yes."

That evening the Negro woman came to see the pastor. "I understand," he said, "that your children are not going to our Catholic school. Do you want them to go?"

"Oh, yes, Father," she said, "more than anything else in the world. But the other pastor wouldn't let them go."

"In that case," said the priest, "tell your children to report for classes here tomorrow morning."

It wasn't long before the Sodality Prefect, the President of the Holy Name Society, the chairman of the Altar Society, and the executive member of the Parent-Teachers Association presented themselves in an indignant body to the new pastor. "We want you to know, Father, that we simply cannot have Negroes attending our school!"

"Just a minute," the new pastor said, "I hope you realize what you are saying. Do you know that this Negro woman, like every Catholic parent, is obliged under pain of mortal sin to send her children to a Catholic school? If you ask me to forbid her to send her children here, you are placing her in an impossible situation, in a deliberate occasion of sin. In the second place, you make me responsible for denying a Catholic education to those children, clearly a sin. And in the third place, you are placing yourselves in great danger of sin by having such an attitude. My friends, those children, and any other Negro children who are eligible, as long as I am pastor of this parish, are going to be accepted in this school."

That is prudence, the only kind of prudence a Negro can understand. Anything that differs from it, to the extent of the difference, is only cowardice.

A Rosary of Bread

"We lived on the rosary"

Philip M. Hannan

"I have been in many concentration camps since my cruiser was torpedoed early in 1941. But this is the filthiest I've ever been in," remarked Captain A. D.C. van Eyk of the Dutch Navy in the simple, detached manner of those who have suffered beyond shock and surprise. As ranking officer among the liberated prisoners, the Captain had been placed in command of the camp.

"What's the name of this camp?" I asked.

"Wobbeling—that's the name of this place. I don't know the official name or number of the camp."

"Wobbeling — sounds rather pretty for such a terrible place."

"Never thought of that," wryly remarked the Captain, enjoying his first American cigarette in years, during a brief lull in the hectic, nauseating process of evacuating the helpless prisoners from their quarters. Only a handful of the surviving prisoners could walk with assurance, and the rest, long prostrate from dysentery, typhus, and starvation, had to be carried from their filthy log bunks to the lone truck assigned to this evacuation work. The Captain was one of the very few prisoners capable of helping us lift the former prisoners into the diesel-driven truck which, solemnly warned the German driver, constantly threatened to erupt from overheating.

"I'm surprised that so many are still alive," I replied. About seven hundred were still clinging to existence of the four thousand who six weeks previously had been driven into the camp to die. A few potatoes and a little black bread were practically the only food provided and the water facilities consisted of a single, small tap which supplied a stream of polluted water.

"We lived on hope," continued the Captain in his faultless idiomatic English which had been learned in the ports of England and the United States; only an occasional, ill-pronounced "j" or "w" indicated his Dutch descent.

"Who aroused or maintained the hope?"

"The thought of liberation—and the three priests we had in camp. Really, they were saints, especially the one who died just yesterday, the day the camp was liberated. He encouraged everyone — Russians, Jews, French, Dutch, Belgians—and when liberation finally came, he died of exhaustion." The Captain paus-

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Now Assistant-Chancellor for the Archdiocese of Washington, Dr. Hannan relates an incident drawn from his experience as a chaplain in World War II.

ed, enjoying for a moment his memories of the departed hero. "You should have seen that funeral, Father. His burial was the first job of the liberated camp. Everyone who could walk, even those who say they are atheists, were in the procession. A priest read the prayers and we buried the body at the edge of the camp. I've never met a man like him, and everybody thought the same."

One Priest Survived

"Where are the other priests?" I asked, surprised that their presence had not been mentioned.

"It was a great pity. Another one died this morning and was buried. Too bad you didn't get here sooner."

"That means that one is left. Where is he?"

"Too weak to walk. I'll show you."

As we walked towards the prisoners' quarters I inquired if the priests had ever been able to hold religious services, secretly or publicly.

"All services were strictly forbidden. The priests secretly heard confessions and once I received Holy Communion. I was tremendously surprised. Don't ask me how the priest did it—a wise prisoner never asked unnecessary questions."

Without any further explanation of this very remarkable feat, the Captain led me back into the reeking dormitory with its triple tier of log-constructed bunks where the near-dead lay in over-powering stench and misery amid the dead. We found the priest, so weak in body that he could scarcely sit up, but still stout of spirit that he refused any preferential treatment and insisted on waiting his proper turn for evacuation. The greatest comfort to the priest, a Belgian whose patience reminded one of a vast tranquil sea, was the knowledge that an able-bodied priest had arrived to continue his spiritual work. We arranged to give him proper, if not preferential, treatment which he gratefully accepted but with the resigned air of one who has uttered his *Nunc dimittis* and joyfully awaits his eternal reward.

While we were speaking to the priest, the prisoner-doctor came over to join in the conversation with that easy informality found so often in liberated camps. He was a French citizen, the son of a Russian emigre, who was as admirably equipped by his knowledge of languages as by his knowledge of medicine to render aid to the polyglot group of patients.

"I wish you'd come to see my patients in the women's camp, Father. They'd be very glad to see a priest after all these years." There was as much pride of profession as solicitude in the voice of the doctor. "The camp is across the road."

We broke off our conversation with the priest, who seemed to get added comfort from the thought of a priest finally seeing

the long-neglected women prisoners, and set off for that section of the camp.

The Women's Camp

The liberated women prisoners were in the usual barbed-wire enclosure but the whole area of their camp had a strangely festive appearance, as if a May-pole celebration was being held in a prison courtyard. Improvised flags and penants flew everywhere and all the women had new scarves or shawls whose bright freshness was heightened by the drabness of their prison clothes.

"They seem to be in excellent condition after such an ordeal," I remarked, completely surprised, as we approached the entrance to the camp.

"Women can live on much less than men, and these women are all Poles—very hardy," replied the doctor, graciously declining any credit for the condition of the women prisoners.

"What's happened?" We were standing at the entrance of an undoubtedly severe concentration camp, but it looked like a festival day in Graustark.

"The Nazis had a large storeroom of swastikas and flags in one part of the women's camp and they broke into it after liberation. Women can make anything out of a swastika. They're better dressed now than they have been since 1940," chuckled the doctor, enjoying the spectacle of the converted swastikas.

As we were watching this strange fashion parade, a group of the women spoke to the doctor who introduced me as a Catholic chaplain. The introduction was electrifying: bursts of excited comments and calls to nearby groups brought a tide of devout women toward us, all blessing themselves, simultaneously laughing and crying and making requests while trying to kiss my hand. I was completely unprepared for this reception and felt like an imposter posing as a bishop. The doctor came to my aid and assured them that Mass would be said for them and that all could receive Holy Communion. This stilled the tumult but many stood around to carry on a friendly conversation and to gather some general information.

After we had conversed for a while, through the doctor-interpreter, I complimented them on their vibrant, manifestly robust faith which had survived so many trials including the deprivation of the ministrations of a priest. Knowing that the Nazis deprived all prisoners of religious articles upon their admission to a camp, I inquired whether they had held any informal religious services secretely or publicly.

A Christian Heroine

There was an immediate and unanimous, if confused, reply. Many pointed to a quiet, reserved woman of about thirty years who was peremptorily beckoned over to the group. As she came over her whole demeanor reminded me that the Protes-

tant chaplain of our regiment had told me that morning of hearing about a wonderful woman in the camp who had helped the other prisoners greatly.

She was a plain woman, distinguished only by that air of nobility always conferred by virtue. Her story was patiently but mechanically relayed by the doctor.

When she was first sent to a concentration camp she was able to conceal her rosary which she recited daily and sometimes with groups secretly assembled. The recitation of the rosary greatly heartened and comforted them. Gradually the rosary became more than a devotion of religious — it became the precious symbol and safeguard of their whole faith, a visible link with God.

The Improvised Rosary

When the camp was moved, because of the approaching American Army, and re-located at this place, the prisoners were searched more thoroughly than before and the hidden rosary was discovered and confiscated. More determined than ever to have a rosary for preserving her faith, she set about to devise a means of making a rosary. The camp, set up in a desolate spot, was absolutely bare of any miscellaneous articles or pieces of metal which could be fashioned into a rosary. They were fed a starvation diet—a piece of black bread of a potato and some very watery soup.

The first "meal" of a piece of black bread suggested an idea. During the remainder of the day she looked feverishly for a piece of string and finally, after locating a short, worn, discarded length of string, carefully cleaned it off on her rough prison dress.

The next day she was given another piece of coarse, black bread. Her prayers had been answered.

She took the piece of black bread to a secluded spot in the camp and carefully divided it into many small sections. Next, she took out the string, quickly rolled each section of bread into a hard, black pellet and fixed it on the string. The end of the string was used to tie two pieces of wood into a rough cross. In less than an hour she had again a precious rosary of black beads!

Every day the rosary was recited on the black-bread beads. The faith and courage of the women prisoners were steeled to meet the staggering hardships of the final days of captivity.

When the story was finished —it ended as abruptly and simply as a bar of gold—I stood silently, awkwardly groping for an adequate expression of my admiration for such heroism. No phrase came. I mumbled weakly something to the effect that God alone could fitly reward her piety—which statement, judging from the careless manner of the doctor, was rendered even weaker by the translation.

"Very little credit was due to

me. Our prayers were necessary for survival. We lived on the rosary. I shall always keep it." The last phrase was spoken very intensely.

"It was a wonderful thing to give up your meal to make the rosary," I said, still mired in the obvious.

"Prayer and hope are more necessary for life sometimes than bread," she replied, and the bystanders nodded their unanimous approval.

"Yes, hope is the only thing to prevent suicide in a camp," affirmed the doctor, very positively and professionally.

"I forgot—the rosary has never been blessed," suddenly interjected the woman.

"Yes, it has been blessed. I'll bless it again, if you insist, but I am sure that God has blessed it already," I assured her, feeling as if I had been asked to bless the relic of a saint.

Surprise!

A Baptist minister in the South had to bury a man who had a bad reputation. He was, of course, expected to say something complimentary about the man in the funeral sermon. After some reflection he overcome the difficulty by saying: "We shall all be greatly surprised when we get across the line by finding some people in heaven whom we never expected to meet there. We shall be still more surprised by not finding there some whom we had confidently expected to meet there. Most of all, we shall be surprised at getting there ourselves."

A Notable Tribute

In 1945, Dr. Jung, the well-known psychiatrist, stated that in the last thirty years he had treated thousands of patients from all over the world—men and women—suffering from what they called "nerves."

The majority of these patients were Protestants. A notable number were Jews, but not more than five or six per cent professed themselves to be believing Catholics, Catholics of a sort. He said that the solution of their problem for all his patients — of those more than thirty-five years of age, was to recover, or to find, a satisfactory outlook on life.

People who complain of a nervous breakdown are not really suffering from their nerves. They have lost their religious morale, of what may be called their "nerve" because their faith has been seriously impaired. They have lost their trust in God's Providence.—Walter, O.S.B.

Eucharistic Priests

Rt. Rev. Wm. Schaefers

Some timely thoughts on priestly holiness

WHEN the hour came for the Son of God to earn (God forgive me this bold expression) the title which the angel used when announcing the Bethlehem Birth, "This day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord," His heart was as heavy as lead. It was bloated with sorrow. It wasn't exactly the choice the rabble had made that filled His heart to overflowing with sorrow: "Give us Barabbas!" That, of course, was an awful thing to have done to Him. It hurt thus to be disowned.

Possibly the Jewish people of that day might even have become followers of Jesus of Nazareth had not the scribes and Pharisees, the priests of the Old Law, led the rebellion against Him. Their unbending pride and blazing jealousies had curdled their hearts, and that left them cold and unresponsive to His love. Small wonder that the Gospels have not a kind word for them. They defiled the last days of the priesthood of Aaron.

But men in *every age* would disown Him. Every day until the end of time there would be those that would turn their backs to Him. He was about to die for all mankind, yet He knew, nay—He saw the multitudes of souls for whom He was about to shed His precious blood in vain. And as He was being led forth to Calvary, hell mocked Him with the howl, "You will die in vain for numberless souls." Jesus knew hell was right. It was this stark, cruel reality that hurt Him most of all and that in the end wrung His heart.

The Blessed Saviour had known about hell all eternity. Long periods of time before the rebellion incited by the scribes and Pharisees, a rebellion had taken place in heaven. On that black day hosts of wretched angels were driven out of heaven and cast into hell. And from that day on, hell's population had increased and it would continue to increase, His sacrifice on the cross notwithstanding. Always the gates of hell would stand open, always, that is, until no more immortal souls would be created — when the universe would be destroyed. After that, hell's population would come to a standstill; from that hour on not another single soul would enter there, neither would a single soul depart from there.

The Fact of Hell

Millions of people no longer believe in the existence of hell. Other millions of people believe in the existence of hell but none-

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theless live as if it does not exist. They are unafraid. The sin of presumption was perhaps never more wide-spread than in our day. Hell is fattening on it. And the world? Well, look at it. Physically, it is a ruin. Morally, it is a wreck. Spiritually, it is a disappointment.

The Atomic Age has set on the march explosive forces capable of blasting a thousand tabernacles into smithereens and tearing God out of the hearts of nations that have been Christian for two thousand years. A world made up of red "cells"—not at all inconceivable!—would in all truth be hell on earth. Atheism and that other insidious evil, neo-paganism, are trying to wrest control from God if they can. Already He cannot make Himself known, or loved, or believed in.

What will the good Lord do now, as He beholds the appalling state of affairs on earth? Will He do nothing, and let the world hang itself? But this can hardly be the answer. He cannot forget that He allowed Himself to be hanged by nails that man might live. What will His Blessed Mother do in this sad and grave hour in the history of the world? Surely she will not desert the human race that was redeemed by Him who was of her own flesh and blood. There is no question about the loyalty of Jesus and His Mother. Even in the blackest night, they pursue man with their mercy and goodness. However, man will have to let His sweet mercy and her maternal goodness overtake him—lest he be lost in spite of the divine pursuit.

What Is Our Program?

And Fathers, what will we, His priests, do in this hour of unprecedented travail? Tell me, how far along are we priests?—or rather I ought to ask: how far away are we from that milepost where it may be said personal sanctification begins? Our Blessed Lady wills that "by means of them (us priests) the world should revive." With her, *holiness of life* is of supreme importance. Holiness is fire. It sets things to blazing. The world is a heap of dead coals. A spark will have to be set to it before they will blaze again. God's priest is that spark—that is, if he is a holy man. Maybe the phrase has grown threadbare from constant repeating, but repeat it I will: "The unsanctified cannot sanctify."

What about it: are we holy priests? Only a few among us are holy men. Others among us are striving earnestly. Still others among us are striving but only intermittently and half-heartedly at that. And alas, some priests there are who care no more about achieving personal sanctity than a dog does about washing his paws in Lux. This sounds crude, but I want it to sound crude.

A sinful priest must be as lonely as a crumbling mining

dump at the edge of a ghost town. He cannot be happy. No man who is in danger of hell-fire can be happy. To think that he, an anointed servant of Jesus of Nazareth, one of God's shepherds, a cherished son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a man who is intimate with the Holy Eucharist—to realize that *he* is standing on the brink of hell and yet be unafraid and unwilling to take a single step back—to know, as know we must!—that he is standing on the brink of the one withered portion of creation with which God in no sense is in union, why, the thought of it ought to tie his soul into a knot.

The Wayward Priest

The most unfortunate man in the wide world is a wayward priest. Our prayers go out to such a one. We must pray for him. It is our duty. Let us have him in mind at the Memento for the living.

Then, too, a wayward brother-priest ought to be a warning to all of us. When we look back over our priestly years and see the sins (our sins!) that made angels blush and the wrongs (our wrongs!) that hurt souls, we realize that we too might have come to a dead end. Some of us have outraged His love time and again. The only thing that saved us was His patience and mercy who holds worlds together kept us from being poured into the pit of eternal damnation.

This is sad reading, isn't it, Fathers? That Barabbas-choice—the crucifixion—hell, and hell's mockery—a world in travail—wayward priests, all unpleasant topics. But they are sobering topics. Sometimes I think we priests are too light-hearted. Some of us seem not to be the least bit concerned that the world is physically a wreck and morally and spiritually near death.

Long, long years ago Christ Jesus came into this world to redeem . . . but wait, let the priest-poet, Father John Tabb, tell us about it:

A little Boy of heavenly birth,
But far away from home today,
Comes down to find his ball, the earth,
That sin has cast away.
O comrades, let us one and all
Join in to get Him back His ball.

We might say that the little Boy of heavenly birth—He grew up, of course, and died on the cross—has again lost His ball. We priests, one and all, must do our utmost to help Him get it back! But if we are to play our part well—brilliantly!—we must keep in training and try to get rid of everything that may slow us up. This means, for instance, that we must practice mortifications and austerities and pile up acts of self-denial; we must not make free with everybody's

interests except God's, or be bold with everybody's rights except His, or be eager to meet the world half-way! No compromising. No earthly attachments, no hankering for pleasure and gaiety, rank and money and flattery.

Let us be resolute, obstinate! Victory must be something more than the pleasant sensation or ardour of desire. If we are not eucharistic priests, the kind of priests that alone can satisfy our heavenly Mother, then by all means let us get down to business and through penance and mortification and prayer rid ourselves of those earthly, fleshy, creeping things that hog-tie us and prevent us from getting out of the mud that some of us naively mistake for virgin soil.

We Must Be Christlike

The Mother of God knows how extremely important it is that in this dark hour on earth her most cherished sons be every inch the priest. She pleads that each and every one of us become Christlike. She tells us that she grieves because there are among us those who do not appreciate the divine wastefulness. The priesthood is running over with the riches He has poured into it. Yet—and you wouldn't think it possible!—some of us act as if the priesthood were a galling yoke that has been thrust upon us. What can the Mother of God think of the priest who remarks that the priesthood "isn't what it is cracked up to be." Her compassionate heart bleeds. She is, you know, the Mater Dolorosa.

Our Blessed Lady sets a value on learnedness and proficiency in her priests, but she rates holiness as the top qualification. Naturally, because the holy priest has what it takes to make the priesthood of her Divine Son fruitful. The saintly priest has God-zeal. God's interests are his first, or better yet, his only interests.

I suppose that every priest in the United States has received a copy of the booklet (mailed by the Reparation Society of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in Baltimore) which contains the Triple Message of Our Blessed Lady to priests. The name of the person who received these messages is not given; however, we are assured as to their genuineness. But no matter, as the editors of this booklet state: "It is enough to read them humbly to sense that if the Blessed Mother spoke, she could not have spoken otherwise."

The Queen of Heaven tells us that we priests are her "most cherished sons" . . . that the priests who have consoled her are they "Who have sacrificed themselves on behalf of souls, bearing the weight of misunderstandings, calumnies, outrages. They are the ones who have suffered and are suffering in themselves the Passion of my beloved Son in all its details . . . I

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"POWER GENERATORS'
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love them!" Our heavenly Queen goes on to say that "in these last years many of them have torn my heart! I have seen the holiness of my intimate ones decrease . . . they must amend, and that soon! They must cease to tear the Soul and Body of my Son, and my own. They must change, and become pure . . . They must return to the way of holiness, and quickly . . . They must arouse themselves from their wickedness . . . the Passion of my Son must not be debased and outraged in their hands . . . I beseech them to celebrate the Divine Sacrifice well, to love my Son with immense love . . . Out of Love I ask and beseech them . . . Many of them have become tepid through a life which does not correspond to their great dignity, and grieve my Jesus . . . I desire that they should look upon the world and upon souls with my eyes and with my heart . . . that they may be detached from themselves and worldly things . . . that they may be lovers of the Holy Sacrifice and prayer."

Our heavenly Queen asks six things of us. With a paragraph devoted to one of her requests I will bring this article to a close. She asks: "The greatest care in the Holy Sacrifice."

The Priest and the Mass

Saint Thomas said a priest has power over the mystical body of Christ because he has power over the physical body of Christ. Each time we exercise the power of consecration, the host on the corporal becomes the mystical body of Christ. This is tremendous power that we have, Fathers, and from this tremendous power stems the power we have over His mystical body, the Church.

Our blessed Mother points out that it is most important to the spread of Her Son's kingdom on earth that we priests exercise our power over His physical body with the greatest possible wonder and reverence. She knows that the measure of our love for the physical body of Jesus determines the length and breadth and depth of our love for the mystical body of Jesus. The priest who really loves His eucharistic body will do most for His mystical body. A eucharistic priest is just naturally zealous and apostolic for the sake of the Church.

Nothing is more clear than that the Eucharist is the center of all priestliness. It is the midpoint. It is the fixed-point about which all our priestly ministrations revolve. The Blessed Eucharist is to all priestliness what the hub is to the wheel, or the link to the chain.

"Take the greatest care in the Holy Sacrifice," our heavenly Queen tells us. Calvary lives on on our altars. The altar-Mass is the Calvary-Mass. Everything we do at the altar is sacred. We say that everything we use at

the altar is holy. The vessels, linens, candles, vestments, all have been blessed and set aside for use in the Holy Sacrifice. And the altar stone—consecrated by a bishop—is a sepulchre in which rests relics of holy men and holy women.

The sanctuary with its altar and tabernacle is a world out of this world. It is the eucharistic abode of our Lord and Saviour. Here He renews, in an awesome and mysterious way, His sacrifice for us in the Mass, our daily life and our daily salvation; or to put it in a very human way, *we* renew His sacrifice. And we keep Him in the tabernacle. He allows us to do this that we may have Him for our comfort in worshipping Him.

In the Blessed Sacrament Christ Jesus is all for us. Should not we be all for Him? Certainly. We should be all for Him, if He is all for us. And the love that prompts Him to be all for us devised the glorious priesthood. And so by the words of consecration we make Him. With our hands we hold Him. With our tongue we take Him. With our body we besiege Him. With our soul we feel Him. With our flesh we absorb Him. The Infinite stoops to the finite. The Immense becomes to littleness. The Sinless caresses the sinful. The Eternal hugs the mortal. You see, don't you, dear Fathers, that the Blessed Sacrament should be to us priests the single overpowering fact in the world!

Rogation Days in Old England

The three days before the feast of Our Lord's Ascension are known as the Rogation Days, and the Litanies of the Saints are sung in procession on these days. What is known as "beating the bounds" consisted in walking around the boundaries of the parish so that they might be clearly defined and the obligation of supporting the poor in the parish might have its just limits. Advantage was taken of the Rogation processions in times past for defining parish boundaries, and although these processions ceased at the Reformation, we still have a remnant of them in the custom of beating the bounds which goes on in places here and there about the feast of the Ascension.—**Relics of Popery.**

Four Hundred Dollars

"Four hundred dollars will provide a burse for the education of a native seminarian. Four hundred dollars is just about the extra amount I put in my new car; I ride now on satin seat-covers and listen to Bing as I drive, while a vocation goes begging in Dacca."—Leo Trese, **Vessel of Clay.**

Caring For God's Poor

Frank Sheperd

The St. Vincent de Paul Society: a leaven in any parish

FOLKS living south of the border are often accused of having a "manana" complex, but a little self-examination will prove that many of us, too, are often guilty of procrastination—the thief of time.

For years the writer of these lines thought of starting a St. Vincent's Society, but the years sped on and nothing was done. Finally, in the Spring of 1946, I got in touch with some of the Vincentians in Evansville, and asked them to come to Vincennes and show us how to get started. They finally came and staged a thorough meeting, attended by a group of men from the three parishes of the city. And now, fully enlightened as to the purposes of this wonderful organization as well as to the methods to be employed, we were ready to make a start.

Meanwhile, I had read the interesting life of Frederick Ozanam and was astonished to learn that during the short span of forty years this good man succeeded in launching a great work of charity which, even in his lifetime, made itself felt throughout the world. Thus in 1845 the first society in this country was founded in St. Louis.

Ozanam was not only a saintly layman but he was also a scholar of renown; several of his books were crowned by the French Academy, books that still are admired for their deep erudition and brilliant style. As a young student in Paris he had been stung by the criticism of scoffing students who complained that the Church was ossified, that the Church did little or nothing for the poor, and so Ozanam decided to show them by gathering a few zealous men about him, and who vowed to prove their faith by doing works of charity in the Parisian slums. How well they succeeded is proved by the existence of the St. Vincent Society today in every land. His own name will live on as one of the greatest names in the nineteenth century.

Seven men of St. John's parish volunteered for the work, and as the attendance for the three years is eighty-nine percent, it proves how faithful they have been. When I first learned that a weekly meeting is one of the main rules of the Society I was not enthusiastic, since so many meetings are rather boring. But I must say that this is one weekly meeting that I look forward to with pleasure. To behold the zeal of this group of men, to watch the interest with which they conduct their meetings and carry out their weekly assignments de-

Father Sheperd is pastor of St. John's Parish, Vincennes, Indiana.

spite heat or rain or cold, to observe their great zeal in furthering the cause of Catholic Action, all this has been a revelation to me.

Despite the fact that I had lived in this community for ten years, I must confess to my shame that I had never visited the poor farm, I had seldom visited the jail or the slum districts; but these men made these visits gladly and with real enthusiasm. Like most pastors I thought that I knew conditions well; but gradually, as they came in with marriage cases, with stories of lapsed Catholics, with hidden cases of neglect and want, my eyes were opened. It is not with the purpose of boasting that I give the main statistics of the three years of our group in these pages. Rather, this is written to induce other doubting pastors to get started in this great work of charity without delay. "The harvest is great but the laborers are few."

Choose a Good President

One of the most important facts to consider in the establishment of a Society is to choose a good president: a man who has the confidence of his associates, one who is pious, hard-working, a good speaker—in short, a man who will devote himself unflaggingly to the welfare of the group. True, the other officers such as the vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, are also important, but these positions can be filled more readily. Our group, with one exception, are married men, taken from the ordinary walks of life, men of ordinary means but all actuated by high ideals.

At each meeting, after the final prayers have been recited, the hat is passed and each member makes his secret contribution. So far these contributions amount to the sum of $575. A box placed in the rear of the church, marked St. Vincent de Paul, brought in the sum of $340. Indeed, the work of this Society has acted as a leaven in the parish; people often bring us money to help the cause along, they donate clothing and furniture for needy cases, they report cases that have been overlooked; in short, these men have made the entire parish charity-minded. It is seldom that the Society is even mentioned in the church by the pastor, but by grapevine method the good deeds of these men are discussed, and thus they are constantly gaining more boosters for the cause.

What about the spiritual fruits? The men in our group are not particularly outstanding in their piety. They are good solid Catholics, but it is evident that the work of the Society has made them more fervent in their faith, it has broadened their vision, they are truly interested in Catholic Action, they frequent the sacraments oftener, they attend all the services faithfully, and they are especially eager to gain the many indulgences with which the society is blessed.

At each conference the pastor has an opportunity to address the group on some topic or else read out of some spiritual book; thus the men learn a great deal more about their faith. Once a year they make a one-day retreat conducted by the local chaplain out at St. Vincent's Orphanage. At the last retreat, our own group was increased by groups of Vincentians from Evansville and Washington, Indiana, and it was edifying to see the earnestness and zeal of these men. The quarterly meetings too are always well attended; the men go to Communion in a body, then they have breakfast in some parish hall, and the rest of the morning is taken up by religious talks given by some local priest. The usual comment heard on these occasions is: "Why can't we stage these affairs oftener?"

During these three years some 162 needy persons have been assisted by gifts of food, clothing, coal, and money. It is remarkable how these men go out of their way to procure jobs for others, and so they have been the means of getting entire families back to the practice of their religion. Eleven men and women so far have been brought back to the practice of their faith; in a number of cases marriages were rectified, the children were enrolled and prepared for their First Communion.

One old man had not been to confession for forty years; his main reason was that he had no decent clothes to wear to church. In short order he was fixed up with a complete wardrobe, his wants were looked after, and when he grew too feeble to live alone he was taken to the Little Sisters of the Poor where he died well prepared.

In this work of finding the lost sheep the men sometimes employ rather novel means. Last year the local Knights of Columbus sponsored a city-wide retreat. Our men drew up a list of men who had lapsed in their faith, and then sent each one a card inviting him in an especial manner to attend the services. Each year a few men are thus brought back to their religious duties—for, after all, people appreciate a special invitation when signed by their parish priest. This part of the work is invaluable to a pastor.

Not only do they find employment for people, they hunt up living quarters for people in need, they arrange with the county welfare for bigger relief sums, they help veterans to get their pension problems solved—in short they relieve a pastor of a lot of work, and do it even better than he can.

It might be mentioned that one of our faithful members, a retired barber, makes it a practice to go out to St. Vincent's Orphanage weekly to ply his trade free of charge. Since the start of our Society he has given some two thousand haircuts which represent a big saving to the institution.

Not only do these men visit Catholics but also non-Catholics, and in several cases there have been deathbed conversions as a result. In one case they visited a good Baptist who had been sick for a long time and who depended on relief money. While he did not join our faith they taught him to recite the rosary and the old gentleman prayed the rosary faithfully (and often declared that it had cured his insomnia!)

In the poor house they found a man who had been in bed for thirty years, a victim of arthritis. He is a studious sort of man who has acquired quite an education by reading historical works, and he also took up the study of Latin. They fixed him up with a new mattress, fitted him with new glasses, helped get him a typewriter and in other ways made him more comfortable. Whenever they visit the poor farm they bring gifts of tobacco and candy, thus bringing some sunshine into the lives of those poor inmates.

Our Vincentians have built up quite a stock of used clothing which is stored in one of the rooms of the parish garage. It is surprising how many calls they get for clothing. In some cases entire boxes are given to families in distress. Also people give bed clothing and furniture, all of which finds a welcome somewhere.

One man in our group operates a furniture store and he has been especially charitable in giving valuable aid to needy persons. Lately, too, the Vincentians obtained a wheel chair and several sets of crutches; these are lent out whenever a need arises. Never did I imagine how much poverty is to be found right in our midst, and often these are worthy cases. You may think, too, that there is no poverty in your parish, but let a group of such zealous men stir around for a while and their findings will amaze you.

During these three years a total of $1,265 was placed in the treasury of our local Society, while a little over $800 was expended for groceries, coal, clothing, medical care, and other items. It is remarkable that in the winter time, when heavy expenditures are made for coal and clothing, the treasury stays practically the same, for then the income is greater than before. God surely is blessing this work and the men are ever ready to vote for these expenditures, for they know that the strong box will not run dry.

It might be noted, too, that when the men visit the hospital wards they hand out Catholic literature, also prayerbooks and rosaries to those who ask for them. This also forms a very important part of their activities.

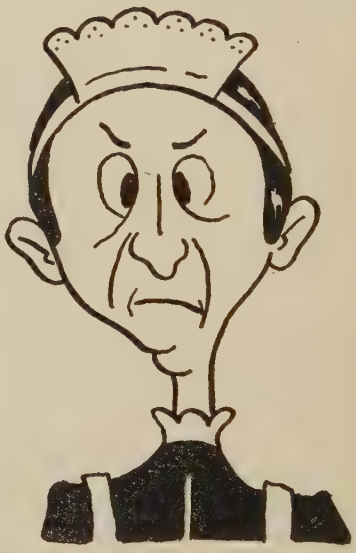
It is my firm opinion that the launching of this great work of charity has been the most fruitful accomplishment of my priestly career, and I would give up all the rest of our societies

rather than lose the St. Vincent Society.

As I mentioned before, it has acted like a leaven in the parish, it has helped our other collections, it has made all our parishioners proud of the fact that they are doing something to alleviate want and distress in this community. I feel certain that if any emergency would arise we would have the wholehearted cooperation of all concerned.

My advice therefore to all the good pastors who read THE PRIEST: *Vade et face similiter.* You may think that you do not need the Society in your parish, that you have no poor people, but you are wrong; they do exist. You simply have not heard of these cases. But granted that you have no poor people, you still need this Society because these men will prove to be your most zealous helpers. They can help you do things that you cannot begin to do by yourself, and at the same time you are training these good men to become spiritual, more Christlike; you are enabling them to walk closer in the footsteps of the Master.

JULIE---Or Housekeepers Are Hard To Get



"I don't know about you; but I'm going to Rome!"

Rather Dilatory Correspondents

Waiting for the traffic lights to change, a friend was accosted by an inebriated citizen, inquiring the way to a railway station.

Part of the reply was: "Cross the road."

Said the citizen: "But how do I get across the road?"

My friend took him over, and as he was going across he was asked: "What is your name?"

"Paul."

"Tell me, did you ever get any reply to that letter you wrote to the Corinthians?"—**The Irish Digest.**

Code and Cult

P. J. Lydon, D.D. St. Patrick's Seminary
Menlo Park, California

ARE there any indulgences given now for "Lents—" e.g., 3 Lents etc.?

No, they are abrogated. See useful pamphlet, *Indulgence Aid,* by Father Mutch (Our Sunday Visitor Press).

What is the Bridgettine Indulgence attached to beads?

The regular indulgenced beads consist of six decades, each containing one Credo, one Pater, and ten Aves. We should add one extra Pater to make seven (seven sorrows and joys of the Blessed Virgin), and three more Aves to make 63 (age of Blessed Virgin at death according to a pious belief). There is an indulgence of 100 days attached to each Credo, Pater, and Ave. No meditation is required to gain the indulgences. Every priest would profit by reading the new book on Indulgences—*Raccolta* (Benziger Bros., N.Y.). It is a translation of the official Roman book, *Preces et Pia Opera* (1938).

I know by confession that the sick person is unworthy of absolution. May he be given church burial?

Per se, yes. The unworthiness must be notorious and public, i. e., both the fact and the guilt. This is not so common in cities. There are six cases in Canon 1240 when refusal is indicated (Kerin, *Privation of Christian Burial,* C.U., pp. 134-144). In case of doubt, consult the local Ordinary. If the doubt (e.g., suicide) remains, let burial be given, but remove scandal (Canon 1240, sec. 2).

How is scandal to be removed?

Tell the people, for example, that there is doubt about the man's sanity; that he gave some signs of repentance before death (when he had lived a bad life), etc.

If a grave public sinner repents at death, must we have a High Mass?

No, it is much better to have a Low Mass and no display.

Is it wrong to say to others who know that I went on a sick call: "I heard his confession"—without, of course, saying "I did not give absolution"?

It is not wrong to say this under the circumstances.

If the Sister in a hospital asks "Are the patients in rooms 210, 217, and 235 ready for Communion tomorrow?" what should I say?

You should always say: "Ask the patients themselves." Some are worthy and some are not. Let the patient talk. The seal cannot be directly or indirectly violated (CC. 889, 890, 2369).

If a sick person refuses the sacraments, is it wrong to say so to the family?

It is not wrong, because there

was no confession at all, and hence no sacramental seal.

I have a sad case of a bad Catholic who married a non-baptized girl with dispensation. They were divorced. May this marriage be dissolved if she becomes a Catholic and marries a Catholic?

It is possible *in se.* It is not a sacramental marriage. But authors have been saying that *in praxi* it would not be granted. However, a dispensation from the natural bond was given by Rome, January 27, 1950, in a case of this kind (Catholic and a non-baptized person—Diocese of Monterey-Fresno, California). It does not differ essentially from the "Montana Case" in which the valid marriage of a baptized non-Catholic woman with an unbaptized man was dissolved by the Pope (1924) when the man wished to become a Catholic and marry a Catholic. It is not a sacramental marriage unless both are baptized. The "Fresno Case" is new in the Canon Law Literature.

What is the theological status of the proposition that the use of contraceptives is morally justified, at least sometimes?

The proposition is "scandalous, erroneous, and contrary to the natural law" (S. Paenit., May 21, 1851). The act is intrinsically evil and always a grave sin (Pius XI, *Casti connubii).* This is the certain teaching of the ordinary magisterium of the Church. Pius XI said that the Church speaks through his mouth on this matter. Some falsely think that this is just a question of Church law and discipline. It is a *peccatum contra naturam.*

Why do authors say that, for example, the banns must be published or a dispensation obtained from them in a case where the pastor knows for certain, from other sources, that no impediment exists? It seems to be useless.

The answer is contained in a general principle of law stated in Canon 21: "Laws that are made to ward off a general danger must be observed even if in a particular case the danger is not present." Examples are the law on getting dispensations in mixed marriages, the law on the banns, reading forbidden books, etc.

Even if the purpose of the law is useless in a special case it is to be observed as a rule. The law is based not on the existence of danger only, but on the possibility thereof. The judgment on the existence of the danger is withdrawn from individuals. Superiors decide.

In some cases, as in reading forbidden books, there is danger of hallucinations in thinking that the reading will not be harmful. But in urgent cases when harm would result from observing a positive law (reading a particular book) the law may be regarded as ceasing by epikeia. For instance, if duty in a controversy requires that I read a forbidden book for the honor of religion and to refute an opponent, I may do so when

it is impossible to secure a dispensation (Van Hove, *De Legibus,* n. 335—Cappello III, n. 161).

Who said "Where Peter is, there is the Church?"

St. Ambrose—"Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia."

Money Isn't All

American Catholics sometimes manifest a tendency to look down their noses at their European brethren. The impression they seem to have is that Italy, France and Spain have a kind of second-rate Catholicism. For those who travel in Europe this impression is intensified by the fact that they are assailed by numerous beggars on the church-steps, the churches themselves are not always as clean as they might be, and they hear stories about the large numbers who do not attend Sunday Mass.

All this may be true; yet there is one yardstick of measurement which indicates that American Catholicism is much less generous than that of, for example, France. We give much money for the missions, it is true, but there is something more important than money: the missionaries themselves. The United States has slightly more than 3,000 priests, sisters and brothers in Catholic foreign missions. Compare this with France, which, according to latest figures, has 15,523 missionaries in various territories. Of these 4,502 are priests, 1,919 brothers, and 9,102 sisters.

Until we can match this magnificent record—let us not boast too loudly.—**The Liguorian.**

Straight to Heaven

A farm worker was just sitting down to breakfast when his mistress called him.

"Mickey," she screeched, "the cattle are in the turnip field. Come on at once until we get them out."

Mickey was furious, but he had to obey. The mistress, who was a hard master, started off with a prayer and Mickey followed sullenly behind. They met a neighbor on the road.

"Good morning, Mickey," said he. "Where are you off to now?"

"Oh, straight to heaven," sneered Mickey. "She's praying and I'm doing the fasting."—**Ireland's Own.**

Sermon Suggestions

For the month of October — *J. F. Noll, D.D.*

Vocations

October 1, 1950

According to the teaching of the Church there are three states of life, to one of which all people are called, namely, marriage, the state of virginity in the world, and the religious life.

(1) St. Paul calls marriage a "Great Sacrament" when contracted by two members of Christ's Church. Such a marriage is truly a Chrisitan marriage as distinguished from a non-Christian marriage or one contracted by people who are not baptized. Christ showed his interest of marriage by accepting an invitation to the wedding at Cana. It was His first appearance in His public life. His evident purpose in attending that marriage was to emphasize the fact that God is the Author of marriage, that He wants to be present at every marriage in order to bless it and make it happy.

Marriage is necessary for the continuance of the human race, and a sacramental marriage, such as is contracted by two Catholic people, confers special graces on the wedded couple to enable them to perform their duties more easily and profitably.

Because marriage is a vocation or a state of life enduring until death, young people should pray even in their teens for God's direction and guidance, and make themselves worthy of that assistance. After finding the partner, who is presumably sent by God in answer to their prayers, they should comport themselves during courtship even better than they might be expected to do otherwise. They should encourage one another to pray, to approach the Sacraments very frequently, in order to keep in close union with God. Too often our Catholic young people offend God more than they please Him both before and after courtship, disposing themselves for a marriage which God will not bless, and through which they will not, therefore, become truly happy.

(2) The state of virginity in the world is not applicable to all unmarried persons. Virginity must be self-chosen and embraced by the person for the one purpose of pursuing the higher life.

In his Epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul extols the state of virginity when it is embraced from that motive. Most marriageable persons, who remain unmarried, do not have that thought in mind, and even when they live honorably and virtuously, they will not have embraced the state of virginity in the ecclesiastical sense.

Many such are doing good work

in the world, as teachers in our schools, as nurses, as clerks, and they could make their lives much more meritorious if they dedicated their services and work to God, offering their work and their service as prayers. If they did this they would not be so dissatisfied with their single state, because without the cares and hardships of the married, they could be more detached from the world, and be immensely happy in the knowledge that they were serving in the place God wanted them to be.

If the multitude in this class had not really dedicated their virginity to God, they could offer their service and work as a prayer that God might, if He saw fit, provide the way for them to be led to the altar.

(3) The religious life is the highest among vocations to which people in this world are called. Speaking of the priesthood Christ made it clear that the candidates do not choose Him, but that He chooses them. "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you" (John XV, 16); and St. Paul speaking on the priesthood writes: "Every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in the things pertaining to God that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Hebr. V, 1).

The Catholic clergyman is called a "priest" because the chief purpose of his ministry is to offer sacrifice, and the same sacrifice which Christ Himself offered in person at the Last Supper, and through which He Himself would be "a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedeck" (Hebr. V, 4).

Other duties of the priest are the preaching of the gospel, teaching every creature the science of God and the way of salvation, and the administration of the Sacrament of Penance, by which sins, the only obstacle of salvation, are removed.

Without the priesthood the ministry of Christ, which was to endure until the end of the world, could not be continued. There is a dearth of priests in nearly every country of the world, and thousands are needed in the foreign mission fields.

Every parent should regard himself or herself as highly favored if God knocks at their door to request one of their boys for this sacred ministry and, therefore, parents should encourage their boy to go to the seminary to prepare for the holy priesthood. Should heafter a few years, decide that he lacks the qualifications, no harm is done; but on the contrary, he will come back home a good boy with high ideals, with a better high school education than he could have procured in the city school, and should become a real credit to his parents.

Conclusion: In our next instruction we shall speak of the Sisterhoods and point out that vocations to them would be plentiful if parents gave more encouragement to their daughters to embrace the religious life.

Religious Vocation

October 8, 1950

Nearly 100,000 Sisters are teaching in parochial schools, instructing the lambs of Christ's flock in the knowledge of God, guiding

them along for the wonderful reward which God has promised to such service. When Christ described the Last Judgment He declared that He will praise before the whole world those who devoted their lives to the practice of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

(1) A clamor which arises from in every parish that has hitherto lacked a parochial school is for the early establishment of one. Costly as it is to build in these days, it is much easier to provide the funds for the erection of a school than to procure a Sisterhood to staff it.

Every parish that has had a parochial school for some years should feel obligated, in fairness, to supply at least as many vocations to the Sisterhood as other parishes have provided for them; and parents who would show appreciation for their parochial school education should be first to encourage their daughter to enter a Sisterhood to help instruct and guide children of parishes which today have not the advantage of a parish school. Every priest is quite conscious of the fact that there would be many religious vocations among the girls trained in his school if it were not for parental opposition. The child is almost afraid to tell her mother or father that she would like to become a nun. If she will have so expressed herself and was rebuffed, she will probably not raise the subject again.

Most Sisterhoods now provide a high school education for girls at a nominal cost, much on the order of a Catholic boarding school, if they seem to have a leaning towards religious life. They live in a religious environment, but are permitted to come home for their Christmas vacation, and the longer summer vacation. But during those four years, as aspirants to the Sisterhood, they have ample time to make up their minds whether to embrace it or to return to the world.

Certainly parents should much prefer to have their girls in such a school than in a public school, where not a single child is thinking of a religious vocation, where the whole atmosphere is practically pagan, and where looseness of moral ideals prevails.

(2) Just as we could have several thousand more Catholic schools in the United States if there were more Sisters to teach in them, so we could have hundreds of more Catholic hospitals in this country if more girls embraced the nursing profession under religious auspices.

The public school teacher and the lay nurse are both held in esteem, even though they never have a spiritual motivation for anything they do. They teach or nurse only to make a living through it. How much more should the religious teacher and the religious nurse be esteemed who perform their work solely out of love for the children or parents who are confided to their care? The Catholic teacher sees in every child a child of God, and takes delight in developing in it a life in keeping with his dignity. Every religious nurse sees in her patient one of "the least of Christ's brethren," and waits on him like she would on Christ Himself, with kindness, patience, charity.

Parents who would oppose their daughter's becoming a religious teacher or nurse, but who would not oppose her becoming a lay teacher or a lay nurse, are certainly material and worldly-minded.

If they should entertain the no-

tion that the child is deprived of something worth while in the religious life, which they would have in the world, they are very sadly mistaken. Like St. Paul the religious can say "having nothing I possess all things."

(3) But, as a matter of fact, even from the worldly point of view the religious has greater social security from the moment she enters the convent until the end of her days, than any person in the world whosoever, including the multi-millionaire.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ declared that people would not need to worry about what they had to eat or drink or what they had to put on if they sought "first the Kingdom of God and His justice." He declared that if they would seek the first things first God would add all the other things; and the fulfillment of that promise is realized in the religious life better than anywhere else. The Nun needs not even be worried about unemployment, about next month's rent or the monthly payments on things needed in the home.

She enters a home provided with all these things; she is fed and clothed and taken care of in sickness and in health even better than anyone, without exception, in the world.

Her work is a delight because of the motive with which she performs it. In her heart she has the peace of God which alone makes one truly happy.

Things of the world have no attraction to her because she has become, even by choice, detached from them. Her interests are in things spiritual and they are the only things which count in relation to our eternal destiny.

Conclusion: Do not oppose your daughter's vocation to the religious life, no matter from what viewpoint you consider it. If you think you need her help at home should your faith not dictate that God will supplement, in some way, the things for which you depend on her? If you would try to wean her away from her vocation by providing company for her, God might show His displeasure by permitting her to marry unhappily.

Yes, there is something very wrong with the mentality of a parent who would try to prevent either a son or a daughter from declaring his or her life to humanity, and not only to sanctify his or her soul, but to find ineffable happiness in the service.

The National Organization For Decent Literature

October 15, 1950

Just as the Catholic Bishops in this country formed the "Legion of Decency" to guarantee clean motion pictures shown in every city and town of the nation, so, in the year 1938, they formed the "National Organization for Decent Literature" designed to make present-day magazines, especially those of the story kind, safer for people to read.

(1) Just as motion pictures are rated according to A-1, A-2 and B standards, not according to the arbitrary opinion of the censor, but according to a very sane Code, which the Motion Picture Producers agreed to accept, so magazine

literature is approved or disapproved according to the arbitrary idea of persons assigned to review them, but according to a five point Code, by which most publishers have agreed to abide.

The NODL Code lists periodicals as objectionable which:

(a) Glorify or condone reprehensible characters or reprehensible acts;

(b) Contain material offensively "sexy";

(c) Feature illicit love;

(d) Carry illustrations indecent or suggestive, or;

(e) Advertise wares for the prurient-minded.

If crime is wrong evidently it is equally wrong to glorify it by making its perpetrator a hero.

I hardly need to tell you that most story magazines are too "sexy" either in their presentation or in their many pictures by which they are illustrated. Dozens of them, with which your children are acquainted, cannot but do harm to their moral sense and, therefore, it is the strict duty of parents to forbid their children to purchase them, or to read those purchased by others.

Not only magazines, but certain little books known as "Pocket Books" are now being sold at drug stores and other places, and they do more harm than the magazines because the stories they contain would usually not pass censorship if they appeared in the magazine.

(2) Stories appear frequently in what were regarded as very high class magazines, yet no community would tolerate their presentation on the stage. Identifying passion and lust with love—while they are the very opposite—they relate in detail intimacies, knowledge of which the public is not entitled to. Filthy stories are often represented as "true," but most of them are written by a little colony of persons employed by many of the publishers jointly, and they are the concoction of their own brains and imaginations.

Many magazines offend less in their advertisements, which invite correspondence for the sale of various sorts of filthy things. Their chief stock-in-trade is the advertising of "sex-books," not for the sake of sex instruction, but rather to stimulate a habit among youth for sex entertainment.

It is very easy to clean the city racks of all disreputable magazines, because nine out of ten among all parents, whether Catholic or non-Catholic want their children kept clean-minded, and because the neighborhood store that sells the magazines could not afford to offend the people who come to it for other things than magazines.

But it is not sufficient to agree to the theory of all this, you must, individually, tell the druggist or any other seller of magazines that you cannot patronize him for other things he sells while he carries harmful literature in the form of periodicals or these "pocket books."

(3) More recently the "National Organization for Decent Literature" has found it necessary to direct its attention to the Comics, 60,000,000 of which are sold every month, mostly to children. We are not talking about the comic strips which appear in your daily newspaper, but to the Comic magazines, an average of two of which come into every home every week. They violate the NODL Code as much as do the regular magazines. They often picture crime in a manner which glori-

fies it; they create the impression that tough youth is brave; that passion is love. During the past years mayors of many cities have found it necessary to ban from the community a great many Comics. In the city of Detroit sixty-four of these were outlawed, and almost an equal number in many other cities. In some cities ordinances have been passed prohibiting the sale of Comics which deal with murder, burglary, arson or assault with a deadly weapon.

The National Federation of Women's Clubs in October, 1948, set up a National Council to draft a Code of ethics which the publishers of Comics are expected to follow.

Of course the NODL has also drafted a Code which has been accepted by the Druggist Associations in most states in the Union.

On the principle that "what is everybody's business is nobody's business" most Catholics remain indifferent and look to George to do it. They may not take that attitude in conscience. Just as neither they nor their children may patronize "B" pictures so they may not purchase nor read magazines or Comics which offend against the NODL Code. They could influence druggists or other sellers of these things by merely asking him, when they patronize his store for something else, whether he is observing the NODL Code in regard to periodicals and comics. They can thank him when he cooperates and rebuke him if he does not. While in every community there should be a special committee assigned to watch the newsstands, every father and mother, every youth, can be a committee of one to ask the question we have just urged.

Dealers can easily be persuaded to clean up their own shelves if they find public opinion wants them to do so. Therefore do not be remiss in this matter, and do not depend on others to do what it is your own plain duty to do.

Pray For And Give To The Missions

October 22, 1950

You are all familiar with Christ's last words to the Apostles, used by the Church on Trinity Sunday, "Go ye, therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. XXVIII, 19-20).

If the supreme interest of Almighty God on earth is the salvation of souls, we cannot be said to love Him unless we be actually occupied in doing something to help save them. We pray in an indefinite manner every day for this purpose in the Lord's Prayer. The petition "Thy Kingdom Come" has become the watchword of the Apostleship of Prayer, which has members in every part of the world.

(1) If the human soul possesses a value greater than the whole material universe; if its destiny is eternal felicity with God in Heaven; if the knowledge and love of God are necessary for the realization of its destiny, then any movement organized for the salvation of souls is the most important, the most momentous enterprise conceivable.

Today because of the poverty, unemployment, and destitution throughout Europe; because the

millions who live in former Catholic lands behind the Iron Curtain are not even permitted to send money out of the country, the chief Shepherd of Christendom presently looks to the United States for practically all support for the Foreign Missions.

Yet even here we are not called on to do one-fifth as much as Protestants are. While they give to the Home and Foreign Missions, in small amounts, fifty-two times a year, Catholics are called on to give only in one large Mission Collection in October, the Sunday before the feast of Christ the King.

It is true that memberships in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith are also sought from all our people, but those memberships, amounting to $1.00 a year, represent only two cents a week.

Occasionally some missionary, representing a Religious Order working in China, or Japan, or India, or Africa, addresses this congregation at the invitation of the pastor, but those who represent Religious Orders in the United States now operating in any of these fields, do not draw from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith for Foreign Missions.

(2) Not all that you contribute to the Mission Sunday Collection is sent abroad. Forty per cent of the same is sent to the American Board of Catholic Missions to assist in the extensive mission territory in our own United States. In the entire southland east of the Mississippi the Bishops have an immense Negro problem, and can expand work among them only through help received from the outside. In the southland west of the Mississippi there are nearly 2,000,000 Mexicans scattered over a vast territory, and for them churches must be built by the American Board of Catholic Missions and by the Catholic Church Extension Society.

Last year the American Board received nearly $2,000,000 through collections taken in every diocese in the United States and disbursed it among Bishops and Religious Congregations of Men and Women whose lives are devoted to work among Negroes, Spanish Americans, Indian Missions, and in sparsely settled areas of the west.

Forty per cent of the memberships in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith is for Home Missions; the other sixty per cent is sent to the National Office in New York for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith for Foreign Missions; and, once a year, the head of this organization goes to Rome to sit with the World Officers of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith under the direction of the Holy Father, and the full amount of money is allocated — always in inadequate amounts — to mission territories throughout the entire globe

More than 100,000 priests, nuns and native catechists work in these fields for their bare living needs. Divide about $4,000,000 among more than 100,000 people and it will be clear to you how little the annual grant to each amounts to.

(3) They do not appreciate their faith very much who will not give generously towards its spread both at home and abroad. Did not Jesus demand that the gospel be preached to "every creature?" But it could not possibly be brought to every creature, even in this country, unless each Catholic became an apostle to acquaint with the teachings and practice of his faith his

close friends, his non-Catholic relatives, his next door neighbor. Since they do not come to our churches they cannot be reached by the priest, yet the obligation holds that the priest is responsible for the soul of every person, Catholic and non-Catholic, within his parish boundary lines. Since he cannot reach them in person, he must reach them through you, the laity, and you should not only show a willingness, but an eagerness to be an apostle, a Christopher. Combined to this personal missionary activity you should offer prayers. Pray for the particular individual with whom you would like to share your religion. God gave to you the faith as a pure, unmerited gift, while He expects others to find it, with the help of His grace, to make sacrifices in order to embrace it. Hence you will understand what I mean when I say that the Catholic who would not make personal sacrifices and give of his time and zeal to help others religiously and spiritually does not sufficiently appreciate what God gave him.

Many lapses from the Catholic religion are due to this very thing. It is on record in Holy Scripture that it has been God's policy to take away the faith from almost an entire nation which did not appreciate it, and bring it to those who were more disposed to appreciate it, and who received it, often amid untold difficulties, with gladness.

But as to the Foreign Mission field, if you yourself cannot go into it, and help cultivate it; if you cannot, or are unwilling to give one of your sons or daughters to that cause, then the least you can do is to help feed and clothe the ones who do leave country and home and relatives to sacrifice their entire lives for the conversion of pagan souls. To the worldly-minded that may appear to be foolish, but if one soul is worth more than the entire world, and Christ declared that it is, then they acted most wisely, seeking, through, their mission activities, to make their own souls safe, in the bliss of God, for all eternity.

Christ The King

October 29, 1950

Today is the feast of Christ the King, a feast which was instituted by the late Pope Pius XI, in 1925, to testify anew to the supreme authority of Christ over all nations and all peoples, and to implore prayer that the King of Kings aid in the establishment of "the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ."

(1) In promulgating the Feast of Christ the King, Pope Pius XI declared:

The rebellion of individuals and of nations against the authority of Christ has produced deplorable effects—the seeds of discord sown far and wide; those bitter enmites and rivalries between nations, which hinder so much the cause of peace; that insatiable greed which is so often hidden under a pretense of public spirit and patriotism, and gives rise to so many private quarrels; a blind and immoderate selfishness, making men seek nothing but their own comfort and advantage, and measure everything by these; no peace in the home, because men have forgotten or neglected their duty; the unity and

stability of the family undermined —society, in a word, shaken to its foundations and on the road to ruin.

What the Holy Father wrote just twenty-five years ago is true in a far greater sense today. At that time Communism, which is atheistic, after having attempted unsuccessfully to establish itself in Austria and Hungary, was confined to the Russian people. At that time the middle-age and the other generation in Russia cleaved tenaciously to the faith of which Lenin used all his power to deprive them. But since that time a new generation has been reared in Russia not only without religion, but actually in irreligious, atheistic schools.

Since this feast was instituted, Hitler came into power in Germany and imitated the ruler of Russia, removing religious textbooks from all the schools and substituting textbooks designed to paganize the minds of the children. Lenin is gone and Hitler is gone. But the successor of Lenin seems to be the personification of anti-Christ.

(2) You need not be told, of course, that by deception and treachery, by force of arms, the Soviet has since taken complete possession of many Catholic countries, such as Poland, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and of countries where the Catholic population was large, such as Yugoslavia and Roumania.

The Primates of Yugoslavia are prisoners, because, in the name of Christ, they resisted the Soviet effort to dethrone Christ in their nations, which has possessed the Catholic faith for 1,000 years.

The religious life over the United States was a hundred per cent better in 1925 than it is today, taking the country as a whole. There were then very few offensive motion pictures, filthy, magazines, and far less juvenile crime. The divorce rate was much lower, and people had a greater sense of decency in all respects.

Christ reigns not merely when all the people theoretically accept His doctrine, but when they observe His moral law. Faith must demonstrate itself by religious and spiritual practices; it must manifest itself by its fruits in the lives of those who profess it.

Lip-service to Christ the King is not sufficient. The service should manifest itself not only in personal loyalty, but in a militant campaign against error and evil. It is not sufficient that the Hierarchy of any country recognize Christ as King, and, in the United States, Mary as Queen and Patroness, but that individuals also make the same acknowledgement, and show that they are sincere by habitually honoring Christ and His Blessed Mother and by conforming their lives to theirs.

(3) When Christ is not properly honored we have Good Friday all over again. He is summoned before civil tribunals, and after being forced to acknowledge that He is King, is sentenced to death for making the affirmation. Throughout much of the world today the officials of governments are saying with the people who clamored for Christ's death: "We shall have no king but Caesar," and that explains better than any other reason that could be adduced why there are such confusions and travail in the world in this so-called "enlightened twentieth century."

Since you and I and everyone

else was made to "know, love and serve God in this world," we cannot possibly be made happy by neglecting to do so.

It is in our power to force our representatives to the federal and state governments to recognize Christ as King in this nation, but we neglect to do so. It is certainly within our power to have Christ become the recognized ruler and authority in our own homes. That is the purpose of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, which is being fostered. That is the purpose of Family Prayer, especially the Family Rosary, during which we meditate on practically the entire life of Christ, and keep in closest contact with the chief teachings of our faith.

We pray that Christ's Kingdom may come, which means that it might be extended throughout the world, but what are you doing to bring even your next door neighbor under its domain and influence?

How often do you speak of Christ's claims to sovereignty in your many conversations with friends and neighbors?

It must never be forgotten that Christ referred to His Church in this world as His "Kingdom of Heaven." The purpose is clear. He meant to impress on us that the way to His Kingdom above is through His Kingdom down here. We have been enrolled in this Kingdom as citizens, and, therefore, must ever honor our king. We became citizens by being formally adopted into His Kingdom, at which time our souls were also clothed with supernatural beauty, made worthy of the supernatural glory which is that of the triumphant King in Heaven. By that act, to use St. Paul's words, God has "delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love."

This is the day to express your gratitude for this special blessing from Heaven, the day on which you should renew your loyalty to Christ as your King, and to resolve to serve Him.

This day is Reformation Sunday in many Protestant Churches, and in sermons the real Kingdom of Christ on earth is attacked. We owe Christ reparation for this by becoming more devoted citizens in His Kingdom, more personally loyal.

Scientist's Secret

Perhaps testimony of the kind that follows, since it comes from a doctor, will have much more weight than if it were repeated by a dozen priests:

"As an alienist, and one whose whole life has been concerned with sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all the hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depression of the spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a disturbed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer."

The speaker was Doctor T. Bulkley; the occasion was an address to the British Medical Association; the transmitter is **Quote.**

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Saint Benedict

By T. F. Lindsay

Who was St. Benedict? What is the real story of his life? We know that he was the author of the famous **Holy Rule**, and the founder of a historic abbey on the now tragic heights of Monte Cassino. The biographical sources are extremely few, but out of them Mr. Lindsay has woven an inspiring portrait of this man of God and his immense achievement.

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Book Reviews

Catholic Biblical Encyclopedia

(New Testament)

John E. Steinmueller, S.T.D.
and
Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J., Ph.D.

Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., N. Y., 1950, pp. 702, $9.75.

RECENT papal pronouncements have urged that Sacred Scripture be made "abundantly accessible to the flock of Jesus Christ," so that "being saturated with the Bible they may arrive at the all-surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ," that they draw from it "knowledge and love of God, progress in perfection, and the happiness of their own individual souls." These quotations we have taken from the authors' preface, wherein they express their hope that this work may contribute to the achievement of such noble aims. Assuredly it will.

This is the first Catholic Biblical encyclopedia of the New Testament compiled for English readers and as such should serve a wide audience admirably. It is professedly a work for the general educated public—not for specialists as such.

It will appeal as well to the clergy and religious and will earn for itself a place in any respectable library. What we hope for it is that it will find its way into homes.

The readers of **The Priest** will be quick to see its value for sermon work and ready reference. There are long and excellent bibliographies in an appendix, but even they show the timeliness of the efforts of the present authors, for they abound in foreign-language titles by no means of ready access to the average priest.

This volume will indeed meet with the "kindness and gratitude" asked for it by the late Fr. Voste, secretary of the Biblical Commission, who had a large part in its direction, and whose name appended to an **Introduction** lends it special authority.—G. J. G.

The Apostolic Parish

Rev. James J. Navagh

Kenedy & Sons, N. Y., 1950, pp. 166, $2.75.

FR. NAVAGH has for many years been director of a unique kind of graduate school for priests in the diocese of Buffalo—called, fittingly, The Missionary Apostolate: its purpose, the training of young priests in pastoral theology; the establishment of more and more parishes in neglected areas.

His work has been watched with growing appreciation by the hierarchy and the clergy but we doubt that it has ever come near the recognition it deserves. This book, which embodies the wisdom of his experience, may, we hope, not only further the work itself but emphasize the need for pastoral studies on the part of the young priest and the expressed urgency

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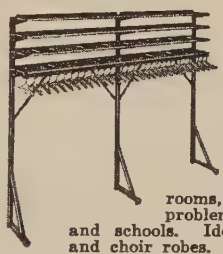

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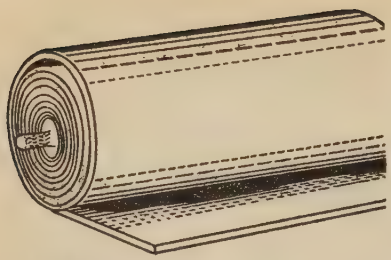

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of methods adapted to changing conditions. As Father Navagh puts it: "It will be parochial effort which will bring about the conversion of America." Lest one think this commonplace from a reputed authority, let him mull over the commonplaces of the Gospel itself.

Some of the topics treated—which should whet your interest—Contact Through the Census, The Sanctification of Sunday, Frequent Confession and Communion, Vocations, Extra-Liturgical Devotions, The Apostolate to Non-Catholics, Parish Finances. An appendix contains some sample parish records and useful forms.—G. J. G.

Currente Calamo

Continued from page 734

for $18 the first day, $15 the second, and $14.50 per day thereafter. What about the cost of blood transfusions and intravenous feeding? May we add, what about hospital bills in general and nursing fees for that prolonged life?

Of course, essential to the discussion is the role of usefulness. As far back as Sanchez we find this test introduced, Sanchez writing that a person in danger of death may not refuse medicine "si sit spes salutis." Can a dying man who has been prepared for death, who has settled his affairs, and fulfilled his obligations, demand to be left alone, when he and everybody else involved knows that nothing can be done to cure him?

What is to be the doctor's attitude to such a request? Fr. Kelly points out that the duties of par-

ents, relatives, and physicians are not "coextensive" in the matter.

Then there is the whole question of euthanasia to be considered in such a context. The attitude of the physician who does everything to prolong life even in the face of certain death "is a sure preventive of a euthanasian mentality," writes Fr. Kelly.

The questions appear numerous enough, though there may be a scarcity of agreement on answers so far.

A Test For Ex-Communist Witnesses

THE Senator McCarthy business seems to be dormant just now, but even so, for future reference we submit a means of testing the veracity of ex-Communist witnesses in trials to come.

Counterattack says there are two types of ex-Communists: the first group are those who were booted out as scapegoats or deviationists, but who still have "faith" in the cause and would pawn their soul to get back in—such as Earl Browder, Clarence Hathaway, and Bella Dodd. Since they are still Communists at heart, they will testify as they think the Kremlin would want them to testify.

The second group are "those who left the party for ethical or religious reasons, or because they were disillusioned" — such as Budenz, Koestler, Bentley, and Chambers.

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Correspondence

Criticizes Pamphlet

Editor:

THIS morning I happened to open the April number of **The Family Digest** at page 14 and found there a quotation from the Queen's work pamphlet "Love, Sex and the Teen-Agers." The quotation itself is unobjectionable, but in my opinion the booklet from which it is taken is not; and as the mentioning of it in **The Family Digest** may lead some readers to order it, I beg leave to state why I regard that pamphlet as objectionable.

In the July, 1947 issue of your esteemed monthly, **The Priest**, there appeared an article by the Rev. Robert E. Regan, O.S.A., S.T.D., entitled "Some Principles on Sex Instruction." In this article, the learned author, following the lead of all the best Catholic authorities and in full agreement with the April **Family Digest**, summarized the principles governing the imparting of sex instruction in the following four rules:

Rule 1. The imparting of sex instruction is primarily a parental duty;

Rule 2. Sex instruction should be graduated, beginning shortly after reason dawns and extending beyond the years of puberty;

Rule 3. Detailed sex instruction should be given to children individually, not in a group;

Rule 4. No sex instruction should be given without also proposing incentives to the practice

of purity and suggestions as to how to overcome temptations.

In the month following the appearance of this article, the Queen's Work published Father Lord's "Love, Sex and the Teen-Agers," which to my mind violates at least the first three rules just quoted.

In the introduction the author says: "This is a booklet to be read by teen-agers. They may pick it up on their own impulse. **I shall be glad if they do.**" That it might not be thought that only the older teen-agers are meant, he says in the fifth paragraph: "This booklet is meant for the young people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen." He says, indeed, that he would much prefer if the parents would say directly to their sons and daughters what he is writing; but he justifies his telling them by saying: "But many a teen-ager has told me that his (and her) parents do not talk to him (and her). As a result he (and she) must be content with misinformation from a dozen sources and half-information from even more sources."

Apparent Inconsistency

So the author will be glad if a boy or girl of thirteen picks up his booklet and reads it. But is it not inconsistent to deplore the failure of parents to instruct their children and then write a book that interferes with the instruction of children by their parents? Certainly there must be a goodly number of parents who are doing their duty in this regard by giving their children graduated instructions suited to their years. But while they are giving out information in successive stages along comes this

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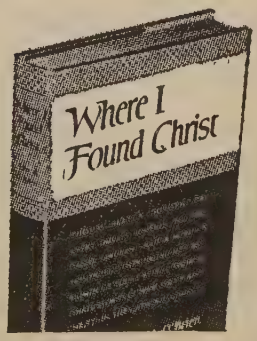

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good author and offers the youngsters a book that gives them all the information at one sitting. There the books stand in the pamphlet rack with the glaring title: **Love, Sex and the Teen-Agers**: and one cannot expect that the teen-agers will resist the appeal, even though the author says in the introduction: "No one who does not care to read on this subject will be tricked by a false title."

The author, therefore, violates the first rule by interfering with the role of the parents. He disregards the second rule by not graduating the instructions according to the age and needs of the young folks. And he violates the third rule by giving the instruction promiscuously, that is, talking to both boys and girls at the same time and telling both sexes what only one sex needs to be told. Thus on page 18 he says: "The girl at this time experiences for the first time her monthly flow of blood"; and on page 19, "During this same period the boy sometimes experiences what are called 'wet dreams,' or he has what is known as an erection, the extension of his sexual organ."

"What Good . . .?"

Will any good result from a 13-year-old girl being told about boys' having these sexual experiences, or from a 13-year-old boy's being informed about the phenomenon of menstruation in girls? I think it will only become a source of embarrassment when boys and girls are together.

The whole booklet seems to me

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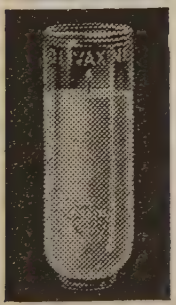

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to show a lack of delicacy, even of decency; as for example when the words "seed of life," "human seed," etc. are repeated ad nauseam. Biologically incorrect is the repeated reference to the "seed" (sic!) in the body of the girl; and theologically false is the assertion on page 41: "It is important for Catholics to remember that between a man and his wife there can be no sin except the deliberate prevention of life."

If my strictures are well taken, I wonder whether anything could be done to prevent further dissemination of the pamphlet. It seems rather strange that it bears neither a "Nihil Obstat" nor "Imprimatur" but merely the statement "Printed with ecclesiastical approbation." Since apparently no Bishop has approved it, could perhaps a list of "Approved" works of this kind be published, leaving this one out?

Sincerely yours,
C. S.

Texas

Father Lord's Reply

Editor:

NATURALLY, I am sorry that "C. S." does not approve of "Love, Sex and the Teen-agers," my booklet for the adolescent. Naturally, no writer expects universal approval. And on so controversial a subject as this, he appreciates disagreement.

However, for the reassurance of your readers, the booklet was gone over with minute care by strict Jesuit censors and with equally exacting care by diocesan censors before it was given the "Ecclesiastical Approval."

However, discussing the letter

of "C. S." further, I should like to explain that:

1. For the parents who fulfill their parental duty of sex instruction, I wrote "Some Notes on Guidance for Parents," a full-length book, and I was the publisher of Father Bruckner's excellent manual, "How to Give Sex Instruction."

Evidently the experience of "C. S." has been happier than mine; I find many, many parents who still do not give their boys and girls sex instruction. My disputed booklet was primarily meant to be an aid for parents who are reluctant to give sex instructions to their children; or for priest's and teachers who are called upon to act when parents fail.

2. The graduation of sex instruction is a truism among guides of youth. However, the practical problem is more difficult than it might seem. Children nowadays are often premature in their knowledge; the films, comics, magazines, and fashions have made them so. So thirteen-year-old boys and girls (seventh and eighth-graders) are often faced with knowledge and half-knowledge and problems that once were confined to the late teens. In writing this book I kept this graduation in mind; nothing in the book, to my mind, would be beyond the range of the early teen-ager brought up today in an atmosphere of premature sex presentation.

3. Is it interference with the parental instruction to give them a book that will help? To make it possible for them to supplement their own instruction? In any case,

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since the youngsters are solicited from the magazine racks to get all the wrong instruction, I felt that a booklet that might present the right instruction was not too far out of line.

4. In the booklet, I take into consideration the deep curiosity about the other sex. Boys and girls nowadays become aware early of the sex problems both of their own sex and the other sex. I felt that a delicate and decent presentation of these problems might satisfy curiosity and reduce the temptations brought about by unsatisfied curiosity. The word "seed," which nauseated "C. S.," was used in order to implant in the minds of boys and girls the correct word instead of the gutter words too often used for this particular fact. Interestingly enough, the phrase "wet dreams" was inserted in my text on the instructions of a particularly expert censor, who felt that it should be handled honestly and openly. Again, the experiences of "C. S." may be happier than mine; I find that boys and girls are widely aware of the facts of sex; a decent and reasonable and emotionally-allaying explanation seemed to me in place.

5. I used the word seed instead of the more correct ovum, simply because I wished to impress the word seed upon their minds. And while ovum was Latin, I felt that the word "egg" would cause them some wonder and perhaps amusement.

6. I stated the general guiltless-

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ness of parents who do not practice birth control for a number of reasons:

a. I have found sin between married couples who do not practice birth control singularly and beautifully rare.

b. I wished to reassure the adolescent boy and girl who sometimes regard their parents' marital relations with suspicion.

c. I wished to remove from the marital relation—as distinguished from the illicit and sinful relation—the flavor of sin.

d. I certainly did not wish to enter into the somewhat unusual and esoteric forms of sin possible between married people.

"Printed with ecclesiastical approbation" is a correct form used by the Chancery Office which gave its censorship to and permission for the publication of the book. It seems to be quite common in the publishing business.

I am delighted, of course, that you published the letter of "C. S." And I appreciate your permission to present my side of the matter. This is a highly controversial subject. I do not believe that silence is the answer. And as long as parents find sex instruction difficult, I think that books like mine which help them in that problem are not altogether out of place.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Daniel A. Lord, S.J.
Saint Louis

Urges Completion of National Shrine

Editor:

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tion by Pope Pius IX. The Fathers of the Council of Baltimore selected Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, as the patroness of our youthful republic.

At last, a national monument in the Nation's capital was to be erected in honor of the Virgin Mary. The completed plans call for a beautiful design. At my last visit in Washington, D. C. some twenty years ago, a crypt had been built. Why has this monument not been completed? Lack of funds, lack of material, lack of genuine leadership, lack of cooperation—what is it? Could it be that the richest country in the world has not enough faith and love to tell all the unbelieving world in letters of stone and bronze, in the works of exquisite art, how our bishops, priests, and people feel about this project? It seems to me it would be a disgrace to allow the Centenary to come with an unfinished testimonial.

Money—alas also in Catholic circles, not excluding our confreres, is squandered for many unnecessary-things—banquets, sports et alia hujus generis, but with snail like pace moves on, or barely moves on, this worthy project. There are too many other monuments of no real value, but not one outstanding monument of a national character and inspired by Catholicity in all these United States.

Why was there never an authorized campaign for this National Shrine in my own archdiocese and perhaps in many other dioceses? Yes, we know the stereotyped excuse, that every diocese has building problems, which never come to an end, because the Church must

grow and expand. We also know that in the words of Our Lord: "The poor ye shall always have with you" and the rebuke He administered to the wiseacres who had different plans and projects. Why should more than 25 million Catholics, why should 42,334 priests (Census '49), why should 15,112 parishes exclusive of missions and stations, why should many hundreds of religious institutes—why should all these be unable to produce the funds?

The organization should be along diocesan lines. A diocesan promoter, appointed by the bishop to solicit funds. Perhaps you could enlist through the diocesan promoter a dollar—each priest, diocesan and religious, to offer one stipend a year. The stipend should correspond to his usual stipend. Many priests have almost daily High Masses. Let their stipend be the one usual for a High Mass. I am confident that even a poor mission priest would sacrifice his mite for the honor of his heavenly Mother and Jesus' Mother. Total the offering from this source by over 42,000 priest participants, and multiply by four to reach the total for the Jubilee Year.

Besides most priests should be willing to give as many dollars as correspond to their years of priestly service. The writer would contribute $45.00, because he has been ordained that length of time.

We have heard that the cost of building is too great and therefore we should wait. Remember that the cost is going up, more next year than today, and is never coming back to pre-war levels, unless we

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have a catastrophic depression. Who can build then?

Let's do something for Mary—to keep peace in the world—let us do it quickly, lest this world perish from wickedness. "Memor tui, sancta Mater, memor mei, precor."

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Comment from India

Editor:

THAT many of my friends want to get your esteemed paper, The Priest, that gives information, instruction and aids so valuable to priests is far beyond any shadow of doubt. But our means are so hopelessly bad that we are ashamed of washing our linen before you. Were you to know of it you may thunder, come down with fire and brimstone at the conditions of ours. You might even think aloud whether "Rerum Novarum" of Leo XIII and "Quadragesimo Anno" of Pius XI have reached our hands and whether they are not meant for priests.

Hence I shall be happy if you would make such an arrangement that we receive a paper on condition we say a Mass or two as the case may be. If this arrangement is effected the priests will certainly come forward. At the top of it all it is very hard, even to the most willing persons, to have the Indian money exchanged into dollars.

In union with the Holy Sacrifice,
Your brother priest,
K. S. Michael
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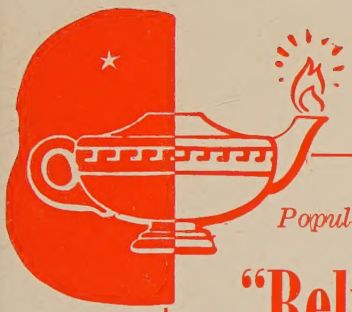

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